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Vermont Gas may
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BY KATHRYN FLAGG
PAGE 32



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Sondra Katz talks fermentation

LA WOMAN

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COMPLETION DATE: MICHAEL, MAY 15, 2013; BY: ANDREA JACOBI

WEEK IN REVIEW

MAY 7-13, 2014

NEW STUN-GUN STANDARDS

Vermont is about to become the first state in the country to regulate police use of Tasers. Currently, each police department sets its own standards for use of the stun guns, but that's about to change.

As the legislative session drew to a close, state lawmakers passed a new bill regulating the weapons, which police officers use to provide them a relatively safe way to subdue noncompliant people. Mark Davis reported on the bill's passage on the Seven Days NH Morning News.

The legislation was prompted by the 2012 death of Macklebin Mason, an unarmed Thetford man who suffered cardiac arrest after a Vermont State Police trooper Tased him. Gov. Peter Shumlin is expected to sign the bill late this week.

It will join the Criminal Justice Training Council, which trains all police officers in Vermont, to craft a training policy on Tasers by January 2015. Officers will also be required to be recertified as Tasers are amended, and will receive special training in dealing with the technology.

The bill also tightens criteria for legally using a Taser. Current standards allow police to use the stun guns when they believe they or someone else is at risk of injury. The bill says police can fire a Taser on people who are "manifesting active aggression" or who are actively resisting in a manner that, in the officers' judgment, is at risk of injury. The bill says police can fire a Taser on people who are "manifesting active aggression" or who are actively resisting in a manner that, in the officers' judgment, is at risk of injury. The bill says police can fire a Taser on people who are "manifesting active aggression" or who are actively resisting in a manner that, in the officers' judgment, is at risk of injury.

Allen Gilbert, executive director of the Vermont chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, said the bill isn't perfect, but called it "a solid piece of legislation."

Mason's mother, Sherrie Taylor of New Hampton, who has lobbied for Taser-use reform, said she was satisfied. "That the standards and training from in June of 2012, my son Macklebin Mason would not have been in that position as an untrained police officer," she said in a written statement. "I am looking forward to the governor signing this most welcome legislation that New Vermont will soon set a precedent that I feel some other states will follow."



Macklebin Mason



U.S. AP/WIDE WORLD

16 percent

That's the share of sales that Colas saw in Q1 2014, down from 16 percent in Q1 2013.



facing facts



HEART MATH

The mid-week death of a Vermont toddler has been ruled a homicide. Vermont's latest ruling is the first homicide ruling in the state since 2008. What's going on?



SPRING DRUGS

Deep-fried heroin, sold in plastic bags, has been found in the state. What's the deal?



GOVT. DEAL

The Legislature has agreed to a deal with the federal government to help pay for the state's share of the cost of the federal government's new health care program.



PARTIAL GOVT

The state's share of the cost of the federal government's new health care program is being paid for by the state's share of the cost of the federal government's new health care program.

TOP FIVE

MOST POPULAR STORIES ON SEVENDAYS.NH.COM

1. "Vermonters in the News: A Look Back at the Year" by Mark Davis. This year of events have challenged the community of an otherwise quiet, serene Burlington police to put together a team to help with the state's police force.
2. "Homicide: What's the Deal?" by Allen Gilbert. The latest ruling is the first homicide ruling in the state since 2008. What's the deal?
3. "Vermonters in the News: A Look Back at the Year" by Mark Davis. This year of events have challenged the community of an otherwise quiet, serene Burlington police to put together a team to help with the state's police force.
4. "Vermonters in the News: A Look Back at the Year" by Mark Davis. This year of events have challenged the community of an otherwise quiet, serene Burlington police to put together a team to help with the state's police force.
5. "Vermonters in the News: A Look Back at the Year" by Mark Davis. This year of events have challenged the community of an otherwise quiet, serene Burlington police to put together a team to help with the state's police force.

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increase in funding to the state colleges, the university and VSAC would raise us from \$400-to-\$500. So we have a lot of work to do."

The lack of public involvement, Deneau said, "is a very significant factor in our lower-than-average college continuation rates in the state."

The other clipper in the room was school governance. Other than addressing opiate addiction, Shanahan's biggest priority this legislative session was to take on rising property taxes, which have been fueled by increasing school costs and declining student enrollment.

After Tim Commissioner **HARRY PETERSON** projected a possible seven-cent increase in the statewide property tax last December, Shanahan urged voters to "authorize" local school budgets and called on the legislature to address the situation.

The House did — eventually after three months of debate, it voted two weeks ago to consolidate Vermont's 173 school districts into roughly 50 "education districts" over the course of six years. But the Senate wasn't interested in mandatory consolidation, fearing it would inevitably result in a loss of local control and the closure of local schools.

It's hard to say whether voters that fall will be more pleased about rising property taxes or the threat of school consolidation, but the politically astute governor seemed to have his eye on both possibilities. He gave his legislators to do something — something — but was careful not to tie himself to any one proposal.

In the end, Shanahan got nothing. Nothing?

As the legislature prepared to adjourn Standing, his education secretary, **BARBARA HOLCOMBE**, and education adviser, **ALF BICHARD**, courted around the Statehouse trying to salvage a big leaf of reform. But House Republicans refused to suspend the rules to take up the last-minute measure.

In his closing remarks to the House, Speaker **SHAW STURGE** (D-Montpelier) acknowledged the failure, but asked the legislature's "willing[ness] to try."

"The conversation was worth having," Sturges said. "And we're going to need to have that conversation in the future, because we need to do better by our kids."

Shanahan, too, now seems to be all about the conversation. He and the C-word at least six times Monday answering questions about that other C-word, *Constitution*.

"None of us thought that we had the magic solution and that we were gonna come out of this legislative session with the perfect answer," he said. "Most of us expect to have that conversation going forward to build consensus."

Whether a conversation will be enough for Vermont voters remains to be seen. Vermont League of Cities and Towns executive director **STEVE JEFFREY** seems to be hoping for more. In an unusually harsh statement, Jeffrey criticized lawmakers Tuesday for failing to take on rising property taxes and, instead, musing new

spending such as universal pre-K.

"The [VLC] calls on voters to hold their state leaders accountable during the 2004 election process," Jeffrey said, suggesting that voters "make judgments about education property taxes the paramount campaign issue of this election."

Media Notes

Last week we reported that, halfway through its fiscal year, Vermont Public Radio's \$285,000 — or 10 percent — behind its membership revenue projections. The station, raised used as an unusual-of investment in direct mail and a 15 percent share-hold in major giving, prompted the station to schedule an additional public drive this summer — in hopes of securing up \$300,000 in 12 days.

When we asked VPR president **KEVIN TURNER** last Tuesday whether any staff would be departing over the financial results, he said no. But on Friday, according to a memo obtained by Seven Days, vice president for development and marketing **CHRISTOPHER HANCOCK** informed the staff that, "SAN FOLSON has admitted, and I have accepted, his letter of resignation as director of development operations."

According to his online biography, Folson's responsibilities include "managing donor mail campaigns, maintaining VPR's member database, and leading the fundraising, membership and events staff." Folson did not return a call seeking comment.

Asked why he hadn't mentioned Folson's departure previously, Turner said, "When we spoke last week, those were the circumstances."

In other public media news, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's inspector general last week recommended that Vermont Public Television face sanctions for failing to comply with federal open meetings law. Inspector general **MARK HOLCOMBE** has been investigating an anonymous allegation that VPT's board of directors held at least 22 meetings behind closed doors.

In a 20-page report, Matchelton wrote that the meetings were closed for valid reasons, but were not properly documented or publicized. It's now up to CPB staff management whether and how to sanction VPT.

Lastly, there's a new boss at Seven Days. Veritas reporter and author **MARK WARD** started Monday as the paper's news editor. He comes in *Seven Days* from the Norfolk-based *Virginian-Pilot*, where he spent more than 12 years — the last four leading a team of seven reporters covering Virginia Beach, population 696,238. The Rhode Island native replaces **ALF BICHARD**, who left the paper last month after a brief tenure.

"Matthew got his start in journalism here in New England, and he's been wanting to come back for a while," says Seven Days co-owner and publisher **PAULA HENRIK**. "He'll bring back a perspective and a Vermont sensibility."



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Can Burlington's Numbers Guy Solve the School Budget Problem?

by AJ CAR FREEE

Burlington City Hall was locked and dark last Friday at 7 a.m., except for one corner office. Under shelves of plastic binders, tucked a tall, lean man in a short-sleeved, lavender dress shirt. On his desk, a bowl of plasticine suggested that this early rising bureaucrat has a soft spot for snails.

Bob Rusten, 63, is Burlington's chief administrative officer. Formerly called "city treasurer," the post is hardly glamorous. It entails organizing elections, holding public records requests and, apparently, working ungodly hours. But when Mayor Miro Weinberger filled the seat he described it as, "in many ways, the most important appointment I have to make."

Case in point: Rusten's predecessor, Jonathan Leopold, launched the financing plan that led to the Burlington Telecom scandal.

If you care about your tax bill, you should keep an eye on the man with the salt and curly white hair who vaguely resembles "Scorfield's Kramer. Rusten's the keeper of the city coffers — managing spending and revenue each week — and his managers day-to-day operations at city hall. He's in the midst of drawing up next year's city budget and will likely play a key role in addressing the well-known fiscal position system.

New Rusten's got a new math problem. Two weeks ago, Weinberger dismissed him to restore fiscal order to the Burlington School District, which has been miscalculating budgets and running deficits for several years.

The arrangement is temporary — Rusten will provide oversight to the district's business office for the next two fiscal years — and still not totally defined. Rusten said he'll have to delegate some of his current city hall duties, but the agreement stipulates that the school district board pay a costs associated with his absence.

Rusten was deputy city manager for South Burlington when Weinberger fired him and him. The two cities had been feuding over how to divvy up management of — and revenue from — the Burlington International Airport.

Rusten helped broker an agreement, but Weinberger was having trouble holding up Burlington's end of the

bargain. Frisco opened with what he described as some protesting "wildfires to put out," the mayor said, "we struggled to meet some of the time commitments." The city manager's manager "held our feet to the fire, but did so politely," Weinberger recalled, and it worked.

The mild-mannered Rusten will need comparable skills walking into the Burlington school system's central office. This boss has publicly called for the ouster of the woman who runs it — Superintendent Jeanne Collins. And while the school board welcomed the offer and said it's looking forward to a "collaborative" arrangement, more cynical observers have labeled the move to a coup that will give the mayor greater control over school finances.

Rusten has negotiated such politically charged situations before. He took the deputy job in South Burlington in part because he had "broad-based respect" for then city manager Sandy Miller. The city council later fired Miller, leaving Rusten to take his mentor's spot.

"It was a difficult period for him," recalled South Burlington's finance officer, Sue Dwyer. "Neither one of them is happy." Tom MacIntyre, who now chairs the city council, said Rusten "acted with significant integrity" when he agreed to serve as city manager on an interim basis.

"The way decisions in that kind of situation would be to say, 'Well, I'm out here,'" MacIntyre continued. "The hard decision is to recognize if you leave, you have left behind all the employees who count on your leadership to move forward."

"I wasn't comfortable with the job even in terms of what had happened to Sandy Miller," Rusten explained to *Seven Days* on Friday. But he didn't feel comfortable "abdoning his responsibility to the city and its staff, either. 'I needed a paycheck, as well,'" he added.

During that period, "But he really drove the bus," Dwyer said. But by the time



Bob Rusten

Weinberger has moved in May of 2013, South Burlington had found a permanent city manager. Rusten left for the bigger city, which was then four years into trying to fix the finances around Burlington Telecom.

The man who will be schooling the district as proper accounting practices didn't graduate in college. Rusten spent the first 10 years of his professional life on the factory floors of steel and paper mills in Pennsylvania, where he grew up. He moved to southern Vermont in 1980, settling with his wife, Susan, and two sons in Middlebury.

After running his own consulting business, Rusten, a Democrat, got elected to the House of Representatives while lawmakers were trying to overhaul the state's education funding system. He quickly earned the tag, posing a group that dubbed itself the "Gang of 30." The

five Democrats and five Republicans all represented what were referred to as gold towns — places with dismountable other businesses that brought in a lot of revenue and stood in line from a spread the wealth approach to education financing.

Dick Marrow, a Republican who chaired the House Ways and Means Committee, on which Rusten served, described him as a "blue dog Democrat."

In Montpelier, Rusten eschewed political drama, opting for a diplomatic approach to policy making. "I never saw him lose his cool," recalled Senator Kevin Malloy, then a Republican representative and another member of the Gang of 10. "He was a real gentleman, always trying to solve problems, and he was very methodical in his approach."

Gabe Styrud, the Democratic minority leader at the time, also praised Rusten's attention to detail. But, she noted, "He was a pain on the executive because he was so process oriented, and sometimes in the legislature that was inconvenient."

Nevertheless, Rusten played a major role in drafting Act 66 — the second of two laws that established the current

How will Bob Rusten contend with the school district's problems, which range from recurring deficits to lacklustre oversight and financial controls?

SCOREBOARD

Winners and Losers of the 2014 Legislative Session

By PAUL HENRY

Every now and then, *Score Days* takes stock of who's ahead and who's behind in Vermont politics. Now that the legislature has adjourned, it's time to tally the season's biggest winners and losers. Here's how it looks:

Politics

WINNERS

Gov. Peter Shumlin — After a tough summer and fall reworking with an onerous neighbor and a million-dollar health insurance exchange, the second-term gov couldn't afford a rocky legislative session. He largely avoided one. By focusing on optics and sidestep, Shumlin earned praise from all political quarters — not to mention national headlines by keeping his legislative agenda modest and avoiding confrontations with legislators. He walked out of an election year session with few scars.

Gun rights — For the second year in a row, gun rights groups put the kibosh on any substantive changes to Vermont's practically nonexistent firearm laws. They killed Burlington's three water-restricted charter change proposals, including mandatory gun locks (With two months remaining in the session, House Speaker Stup Smith claimed there "wasn't enough time to debate them.") And they watered down a new measure to keep firearms away from three accused domestic abusers. Gun control advocates are hoping to require universal background checks next session. We'll see how that goes.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VERMONT SENATOR JAKE CAMPBELL

4th Sen. race — Think of her as Vermont's first senator. The chief of staff to Senate President Pro Tem Jake Campbell (D-Windham) distinguished himself last session for whipping the pro-trade office into shape. This session, she truly came into her own — deftly managing the Senate's competing agendas and keeping the body on track, all while downplaying her own essential role. It'll be a huge loss to Campbell and his colleagues if members of her department turn out to be true.



VERMONT SENATOR JAKE CAMPBELL

Gov. Shumlin — In the end, she decided not to challenge Shumlin for governor, but the House Republican effectively elevated her role in the political discourse this session. Schaefferman learned what U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Vt.) knows all too well: When you threaten to run for higher office, reporters pay a lot more attention to you.

Verizon — Public utility in the end, an early defeat over campaign-finance reform, VERP's policy agenda might fly. The group played a major role in passing Vermont's first-in-the-nation GMO labeling law, led the charge on state chemical regulation and played a role in expanding net neutrality. Resources director Paul Raine got the recognition he deserved at last week's GMO labeling ceremony on the Starksboro steps.

Verizon — Who would've thought that a Vermont Republican would become one of the most effective members of Vermont's Democratic Senate? But this session, the economic development committee chairman got the job



PHOTO COURTESY OF VERMONT SENATOR JAKE CAMPBELL

done from universal pre-tax deductions to better regulation to a (fewer than originally proposed) insurance single bill. His spending roles at numerous Shumlin press conferences confirmed the administration view: he is indispensable. **Sen. Ben Cardin** (D-Vt.) — Cardin, whose portfolio as Finance Committee chair most visibly expanded to include health care, reform and education, and **Sen. Dick Mason** (D-Grand Isle), who was an epic posing match with Shumlin over having a handheld cellphone use while driving.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VERMONT SENATOR JAKE CAMPBELL



TIE

LOSERS

THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY — As evidence of their persuasion, Vermont's business lobbyists point to the state's numerous wage hikes, the unionization of child and home-care workers, Vermont Health Connect and single-payer. But it won't all be bad news this season. The business community killed paid sick leave and prevailing wage legislation, whittled down the toxic chemical bill and passed a \$5 million economic development package. Most importantly, Shumlin kept Democratic legislators from raising more broad-based taxes.

OWNERS' VACUUM — Shumlin's momentum launched the session with the declaration that Vermont was in the midst of a "half-blown heroin crisis." The legislature took action providing funding to reduce waiting lists at drug treatment centers, deterring low-level criminals from jail to treatment, and stiffening penalties for traffickers and those convicted of drug-facilitated crimes. But within a month of Shumlin's State of the State address, lawmakers had mostly moved on — and few more innovative ideas were contemplated.

CAMPAIGN FOR VERMONT — Bruce Lunsford's political advocacy group pledged to be a major presence at the State House this year. It wasn't. But Campaign for Vermont can claim one notable victory: a new ethics panel at the House, which will resolve potential conflicts of interest, and new rules requiring House members to disclose to their employees and paid board service.

SHUMLIN'S FEVER — Yes, we know. The real debate over how to finance and implement Shumlin's single-payer health care plan won't come 'til next year. But even without any details to discuss, Shumlin's fellow Democrats spent plenty of time this session agonizing over — and arguing about — what those details will look like. Can Shumlin keep his party unified around its holy grail of public policy? We'll see.

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF — Shumlin and House Democrats failed a big game this session about cutting school spending, but they had nothing to show for it by the fall of the gavel. **SHUMLIN'S APPOINTMENT** — SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RICK MICHELMORE (D-Windsor), who stood to the way of meaningful reform. His excuse: first his committee lacked the time to weigh the House's school district consolidation plan was kind of lame, given that it didn't exactly mesh up on him.



Rick Michelmore



House Republicans

HOUSE REPUBLICANS — There was no short age of votes in effective minority party could have tried to divide and conquer Shumlin and his Democratic allies. But House Republicans once again proved themselves inept and irrelevant this year. Their sole tactical victory came in the session's closing days when they capitalized on a procedural error to scuttle a health maintenance wage hike.

LAKE CHARLENOIS — Yet again, Shumlin and the legislature punted on cleaning up the state's errors and its biggest lake. Environmentalists criticized the administration's latest plan to reduce phosphorus pollution and failed to convince the legislature to fund mitigation programs. **SHUMLIN'S LOSS** — SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RICH BERRINGTON (D-Barrington), whose skepticism about the role of business in climate change or any sort left his chairmanship next year.



THE PRESS — This was one of the least dramatic legislative sessions in recent memory. That was good news for Shumlin and his majority party Democrats, but bad news for those of us writing about the news. ☹

DISCLOSURE — The Author is the statewide partner of Seven Days/Record and publisher Pauls-Nearby.

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Vermont Has More Addicts Than It Can Treat, So Why Are Inpatient Facilities Losing Revenue?

by MARK O'NEIL

Jack Duffy's friends assume his business is booming. After all, he runs Vermont's largest inpatient addiction treatment facility—Valley Vista in Middlebury—a time when the state has garnered national headlines for its commitment to fighting opiate addiction.

But after three decades, Duffy's business has never been as solid as it seemed. He recently laid off about 8 percent of his staff in response to a \$580,000 revenue reduction, the source of which is his biggest customer—the State of Vermont.

Duffy's facilities, Officially Vermont's two other big residential treatment homes for drug addicts, Serenity House in Wallingford and Maple Leaf Farm in Underhill, are also struggling with state funding cuts. Serenity House is down \$180,000 in a \$1.6 million budget. Maple Leaf lost \$100,000 on a \$4.2 million budget.

What's going on? The Vermont Department of Health has in the past year effectively halved the number of days it pays for addicts to stay in the three facilities, from 30 to 15 days to roughly 10 days.

The state can't afford to pay for 15 days per addict, and sometimes in excess of that can be done just as effectively—and more affordably—in an outpatient program. Moreover, the state says, treatment facilities can help a larger number of addicts if they have lower overhead.

Previously, the health department said, it essentially wrote blank checks to the clinics for unconsciously long stays. Now, the department requires facilities to offer substantial evidence to justify extending a patient's stay beyond 10 days, just as they say private insurers have long done.

"It's a commonly done in the medical world to assure that the patients are getting the right amount of care, not too much care," said Barbara Grogglio, deputy health commissioner for alcohol and drug abuse programs. "We didn't have any guidelines in place

People could stay pretty much as long as they wanted and there was nothing that looked at, 'Was we getting the right amount of care?' This is pretty common. Vermont was not doing it."

The treatment centers say they are uneasy about the cutbacks, as Vermont has limited assets and resources on its important initiative—the "hub and spoke" system—for treating opiate addicts.

For example, in November, Gov. Peter Shumlin cut the ribbon to celebrate the opening of a new outpatient methadone clinic in Rutland, described as a vital tool to combat what the governor has called an opiate "crisis."

At the ceremony, Shumlin talked about helping addicts and treating addiction as a disease.

But just eight weeks away, at nonprofit Serenity House, officials were struggling to cope with the state cuts without resorting to layoffs at the 26-bed facility.

"At these days, it almost seems they're leaving a few minutes after they come in. I think longer is better in most cases," said Dick Keane, president of Serenity House. "That gives you time to bond with a client and make progress."

The state implemented the changes last summer.

"It hit us fast and sudden," Keane said. "More of us were able to adjust to it quickly. We're all feeling the pressure financially."

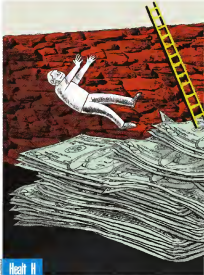
Part of the goal, Grogglio said, was to free up more bed space, to allow more people to experience inpatient care.

Mission accomplished. All three facilities report they have registered up significantly 80 percent more patients as for this year.

"They place is trying to bring in everybody they can," said Bill Young, an executive director of the nonprofit Maple Leaf Farm.

Valley Vista, for example, expects that it will see 785 patients this year, as compared to 504 last year—a 54 percent jump.

But that influx hasn't brought in enough cash to balance their books.



Health H

Why? The first and last days of a patient's stay in a treatment facility are the most labor intensive—and, therefore, the most costly. That's when staff members conduct medical and psychological evaluations and fill out the bulk of the paperwork. The days in between, which involve fewer staffers, work out to be more profitable. In short, fewer clients staying in opiate equates to a more lucrative business model for addiction treatment facilities.

The 15 day limit is not a hard cap. After 15 days, the treatment center can appeal to the health department for an extension on behalf of a patient. Ninety percent of those requests get approved.

"We really have to determine what is the need clearly," Grogglio said. "If they need 20 or 25 days, it will be approved."

But that doesn't tell the whole story. Treatment providers say most of the extensions are only for a few days. Moreover, officials from all three

facilities say that the appeal process actually often shortens the average patient's stay length. Addicts are often overly anxious and fidgety and often enter treatment programs with sleeplessness. Knowing they can only count on staying 15 days and will have to file an appeal—before their time is up—prevents many to abandon hope and skip out early, according to representatives from the treatment facilities.

"All of the patients have a great deal of anxiety about what's going to happen next," said Richard Dittmann of Valley Vista. "The patients shoot themselves because they can't deal with the anxiety."

The numbers appear to support Dittmann's theory. Despite the successful appeal rate, the average stay length at the facilities in the second 17 days And, despite having 54 percent more clients, Valley Vista's "postward days," the number of days each bed is filled, are down about 30 percent. The other programs report smaller drops.

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I THINK LONGER IS
BETTER IN MOST CASES.

—JAMES GILGOLIO



There are, of course, concerns beyond money — namely, that shorter stays will make it more difficult for addicts to receive Treatment facilities say they have worked to condense their programs into the tightest time frame.

Gilgolio said that much of the important work — helping addicts find housing and jobs, and helping them foster better relationships with family and friends — takes place outside the facilities. Gilgolio said the numbers support her department's efforts.

For the first six months under the new 15-day regimen, the rates at which addicts come back for a second or third stay — presumably because they relapsed — were largely unchanged from the prior year.

"The dosing factor is, 'What is the needed level of care?'" Gilgolio said. "One could not think this is going to be the primary place where most people get treatment. The great number of people has always been treated

outpatient. There are folks with very unstable lives, and they have a lot of needs. Residential treatment is designed to take care of one piece of that."

But officers at the drug-treatment community aren't concerned.

Chambers County's Regional Intervention Community Court, in which addicts are diverted from the criminal justice system, sends many of its clients to the three residential treatment centers.

Three RICC participants who spoke to Seven Days on condition of anonymity last February said they would have benefited from stays longer than 15 days.

"That's what they say: 'Two weeks is a start, it's not enough to get anything accomplished,'" said RICC's coordinator Ernest Helrich, a former cop. "You're [just] getting the ground rules. They're telling me, 'I wish I had more time.'"

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Conflict Up Close: A War Photographer and Part-Time Vermonter Gets the Shot

By R. Evan J. KELLEY

Famed American combat photo journalist Robert Capa, killed in South East Asia in 1954, once offered a much-quoted piece of advice to his colleagues and successors: "If your photographs aren't good enough, you're not close enough."

Robert Nickelsburg, who regards Capa as one of his heroes, does get close enough. In a recently published book that chronicles 25 years of war in Afghanistan, the 130-plus photos taken by this part-time Vermont resident rate no better than good enough.

Afghanistan: A Brutal War includes the requisite combat shots, but it's Nickelsburg's portraits of individual Afghans that make that beautifully as well-lit compilation especially memorable. Many of Nickelsburg's pictures are infused with a certain tenderness—an unexpected and ironic quality in a volume focused on the endless war violence afflicting a torn country.

A 2012 graduate of the University of Vermont, Nickelsburg maintains an unheated Charlotte house that his parents helped divide up. He and his wife, photo editor Cray Pollock, live the rest of the year in South Lyon's Cobble Hill section.

Much of the time, however, Nickelsburg is away in war zones. He worked for 12 years in *Time* magazine's Delhi bureau, making frequent forays as a combat photographer to Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan and other war-torn places. Earlier, he got "close enough" to the Soviet Central Asia.

It's a dangerous profession, Nickelsburg acknowledges during an interview in his apartment in a tranquil, leafy street across the river from the cosmopolitan core of lower Manhattan. Nickelsburg says the shadow of death has brushed him "several times," and he has seen numerous friends fall dead as collateral damage in conflict they had been covering. "A lot of it depends on chance," Nickelsburg reflects. "It's a matter of where you are, or aren't, at a certain moment."

Starting in 1988, he traveled clandestinely to Afghanistan via the mountainous tribal areas of neighboring Pakistan with makeshift chaperones who Nickelsburg describes "clever and resilient." He was able to avoid rocket fire from Soviet Mi 24 attack helicopters



Wounded U.S. Army soldiers, just evacuated, by helicopter from Kandahar, the day after 9/11.

The earliest image in Nickelsburg's book, from May 1989, shows a smiling Afghan soldier—clapping the hand of a fellow soldier who's perched in the turret of a Soviet-backed tank and appears happy to be pulled out of his country that the *Red Army* invaded in 1979. There follows a chronological sequence of shots of the conventional war in Afghanistan that culminated in the 2001 takeover by the Taliban.

The world pretty much forgot about that landlocked, and land for the next several years. But Nickelsburg regularly returned to Afghanistan, trying to take photos of the country's new rulers, who forbade all photography. Equally common days were the Arab militants who had fought alongside the Taliban and other Islamist warriors to oust the Soviets, and the government they had installed.

Nickelsburg describes the Taliban as "highly disciplined, extremely strict, very narrow-minded." Their elites from Arab countries, he adds, were "not kind and... were clearly dangerous." Their elements were allegiance to Osama bin Laden, who plotted global jihad from a base in Afghanistan while under the

**There's a lot of
of in Terms of the kinds
of Stories I work on.
The issue now is finding
The funding To do them.**
ROBERT NICKELSBURG

protection of the Taliban. Bin Laden's plans reached a horrific climax in the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington, D.C.

Less than two months after that history-shaking day, Nickelsburg was back in Afghanistan, accompanying invading U.S. troops as they pursued bin Laden to a corner of the country called Tora Bora. The al Qaeda leader wriggled away to survive for another nine years; the escape was the first in a series of failures that came to characterize the war-eking *Americans* as captives of Afghanistan.

In a symmetrical debrief to his story,

one of the last photos in *A Brutal War* shows a contingent of U.S. soldiers trapping out of their base in Afghanistan and heading home in May 2013. The direct American combat role may be coming to an end, but by this point in Nickelsburg's book it's clear that conflict in Afghanistan is going to go on... and on.

What does Nickelsburg say is causing the longest war in U.S. history to conclude without a clear victory, despite enormous expenditures of blood and treasure?

"The biggest mistake," Nickelsburg suggests, "was Bush's decision to go into Iraq." That invasion in 2003 diverted resources and political attention from the fight in Afghanistan, he says.

The Bush administration dropped that commitment," Nickelsburg continues. "There was a failure to read the clues, an overall inability to understand Afghan culture and traditions," Nickelsburg says. "It's a complex, layered place. You can't understand Afghanistan unless you understand Pakistan, and you can't understand Pakistan unless you understand India." And the Bush administration lacked comprehension on each of those fronts, he says.

MEDIA



Soldiers look for a rocket at retreating forces of the Hezbolli Alliance in a city north of Beirut.

Nickelberg was himself diverted into Iraq soon after the start of the war. While working for the *New York Times* as well as *Time* magazine, he photographed Baghdad's Firdos Square as American soldiers pulled down a statue of Saddam Hussein—a symbolically important act that critics of the war contended had been staged by U.S. propaganda. Not so, Nickelberg objects. The toppling of Saddam's likeness in broad daylight was an authentic expression of many Iraqis' detestation of their dictator, he says.

Nickelberg spent parts of four years in Iraq, again getting "close enough" to a war.

As what led him to a career at *Time*—desired of the plastic pleasures of a second home atop a hill in the Champagne Valley?

His mother was born in Germany. Nickelberg adulates, and growing up in suburban northern New Jersey, "I was among international people a lot of the time." An interest in current affairs led him to major in economics and history at UVM, which appealed, too, because of his love of the outdoors. Following a squabble as a doorman in Vermont,

Nickelberg became interested in photography as a way of combining a passion for travel with his preoccupation with world news.

He moved to Washington late in the 1970s to work for a New Jersey congressman and to cultivate his growing interest in photography. Dubious in Congress at that time over the U.S. role in Nicaragua and El Salvador prompted him to travel to those countries, where he worked as a freelance. Nickelberg embarked on a path that would lead through Beirut and Southeast Asia as well as over the Hindu Kush mountains and across the deserts of Iraq.

Today, the trouble-besetting traditional media have ferried the photo journalist to venture in a new direction. With contracts no longer being proffered by the much diminished *Time*, the 68-year-old Nickelberg is working on pace to complete a project on female sex trafficking of U.S. women, dancing entire in the world these women in—habit and winning enough trust to take their pictures as "particularly difficult for a man," he notes.

Nickelberg gained awareness of the domestic sex trade by accompanying

the LAPD vice squad on surveillance missions in the gangland of South Los Angeles. "It wasn't for the 13-olds and Crips to go from guns and drugs to pimping," Nickelberg explains.

"There's still a lot of interest in the lives of women I work on," he says. "The latest news is finding the funding to do them." □

Contact: Arvo@nynedaily.com

INFO

Historical footnote Bob Nickelberg is the second print combat photographer with a Vermont connection. He was preceded by Don Stone, a Burlington native who joined Walter and Jim LHM dropout who recorded the U.S. marine involvement in the 1960s for CBS News and other outlets. Stone disappeared in Cambodia at age 32. He is believed to have been abducted and killed by Khmer Rouge guerrilla fighters whom he was trying to photograph. Don Stone also got "close enough."

Robert Nickelberg talks about his new book *Alphaville: A Secret War at the Heart of the World* on *Goodreads* on Friday, May 18. View and light live news at 6:30 p.m. Local time. Page info: 435 3333

Numbers Guy 49

Renton is only one year in, the fiscal year 2006 budget will be the first that he's seen through from start to finish, and he's just now getting up to speed at the city council. His aspirations, however, sounds pleased. "He has been very collegial and fair but tough with department heads," Wainwright said.

The mayor said he had "serious conversations" about offering up his CAO to the school district, adding, "He has a long list of items that we are pursuing that will make city government more efficient." Sixty-four health insurance costs and the underfunded pension system are high on Runtz's to-do list.

What asked the deal for Wainwright? The importance of our schools, he said. Also, "I believe strongly that the people of Burlington expect the mayor to do something about what is inherently an unsustainable growth in property taxes," Wainwright said.

How will Runtz contend with the school district's problems, which range from mounting deficits to lockouts over night and financial controls? Runtz said he intends to focus on the pricing and sheer size of the philosophy. "Budgets certainly are more than just numbers. It's a philosophy, it's a road map, and I believe that is most appropriate with the school board. I believe my role is to make sure they can financially afford what they are talking about, that there's a plan in place and that the numbers match up."

Stone of the former colleagues said his new project — "We get all the good jobs," Connolly said.

"I don't know why anyone would want to be interested with that role," Mullin commented.

Both men — and at least four others interviewed for this story — did not say whether they believe Runtz is likely to move for the less than idealistic job. Also, he said, "If there is anybody who can do that, it's him."

It is also possible Runtz's former foe, Daniel, has already and has knowledge of education finance policy will amount to a better paid for the school district. Runtz has already raised questions about whether the district is entitled to a part of money, known as payments in lieu of taxes, that the city has shared for years. Connolly said he has not a lawyer, Runtz said he has "success" that state law actually prohibits the school from receiving its portion, expected to total \$1.4 million in FY 2005.

In a district plagued by deficits, that line of inquiry won't make Runtz a lot of friends. □

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Catherine "Cathy" Carmichael, 71, passed away May 10, 2014 in St. Albans, VT. She was born July 3, 1936 in Fairhaven, VT, to Harold and Evelyn (Scobee) Lafayette. Predeceased by her husband Richard, she was a beloved mother who proudly raised her 10 children.

Left to cherish their memory are: 10 children and their spouses: June [Lou], Richard [Barbara], Nora [Noel] [Robert], Bernice [Mary Lou] [John], Carl [Sandra], Gene [Lori] [Crickle], and Evelyn [Frances].

Cathy is predeceased by brothers Sydney and Edward and is survived by brother Andrew and sister Theresa as well as many grandchildren and great grandchildren and many other loved family members and friends. Cathy was a devoted member of Trinity Baptist Church and the Red Hats society.

Visitation will be Thursday, May 15, from 2 to 4 p.m. and from 7 to 9 p.m. at Lavigne Funeral Home 132 Elm St., Westwood. Mr. Funeral services will

be held at 1 p.m. on Friday May 18 at Trinity Baptist Church, 300 Terry Dr., Wilkerson, VI. Offerings may be presented at Lavinia Funeral Home or Trinity Baptist Church. Donations may be made to the National Breast Cancer Foundation. Online condolences may be shared with the family at laviniafuneralhome.com.



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Robert Frank House, his band friend and brother, passed away on Thursday. He is after 60 years of a life filled with family, friends and good times. Born July 9, 1937, in Rossville, Pa., he was the youngest of six sons of the late Frank and Lillian (Unsworth) Mercer. Robert served in the U.S. Air Force at Lowry Field in Denver. He met the love of his life, Nancy Kinking, at Woodworth's variety store and they were married on Valentine's Day in 1963. They celebrated their 24th anniversary surrounded by their family in 2003.

He was a graduate of the University of Denver and worked for Martin Marietta

Comptroller Anthony and Patricia Arnesen during his career as a production planner. He is survived by his sons, Stephen and his wife, Susan; and his daughter, Jennifer, the wife of William V. Janssen, and his wife, the wife of David Cole; his daughter, Wendy of Arlington, Mass.; and his son, Kevin of Denver. He is also survived by his grandchildren, Joe and his wife Stephanie, Heidi, Anna, Christopher, Heather, Christopher, and three great-grandchildren, Matthew, Benjamin, and David. He is also survived by his dear friends, including a company chairman, many family friends, and his neighbors. He was preceded in death by his wife, Patricia, and his daughter, Jennifer. He is survived by his wife, Patricia, and his daughter, Jennifer.

A service to celebrate his memory will be held at the Newcomer Funeral Home, East Metro Chapel, 7800 Platteville St., Aurora, Colo., on Sunday, May 16, at 11 a.m. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Denver Rescue Mission, PO Box 3206, Denver, CO 80217, or to the Colorado Chapter of the National Alzheimer's Association, 485 Sherman St., Suite 500, Denver, CO 80202. To share a memory of Harold or leave a special condolence message for his family, visit bit.ly/colobereave.

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What's So Funny? *Seven Days* Introduces Three New Cartoonists

BY ETHAN DE SEIFE

Maybe the cartoonists in *Seven Days* provide your appetite for a smug, snarky sampler a touch of irony, editors designed to whet your appetite for the main course. Or maybe you see the funny pages for what they are, as a colorful, enjoyable diversion. Whatever your method, chances are that you check them out. Who doesn't love comics?

Seven Days features comics, too, but every year or so we break the section, wedding out a few and bringing in some new ones. Last week you may have noticed the absence of Henry Petre's "Klumpus" with Orange, Ted Ruff and Dakota McFadden. Another change coming soon, but we'll wait to tell you about that one. Meanwhile, we'd like to introduce one of our three new comers to you here.

Shewtop has a wit and satiric bite that are as sharp as a scythe. The disreputable staple has work evoked such memorable strips as "Nancy" and "Berrie Miller," but look more closely and you'll find drug-addled musings and a celebration of all things weird and scary. Watch out for flying eyeballs and discarded eyeglasses.

"Children of the Atom" by Dave Lapp

Unpopular among our new comers for having complicated the storyline, "Children of the Atom" was published for more than 50 years exclusively in *Vermont's* all-weekly the *Georgia Straight*. Author Dave Lapp's strip concerns Franklin Roy and Jess Ann Girl, two characters who wind their way through a surreal, "Kinky Kat" like landscape. It's delightfully strange and thought-provoking, and we're launching it from its beginning.

"Sticks Angelica" by Michael DeForge

This prolific Toronto-based cartoonist, Michael DeForge has been around

IT'S A COMIC ABOUT
A WOMAN WHO IS
SORT OF SICK OF
LIVING IN A CITY,
SO SHE DECIDES
INSTEAD TO MOVE TO A
CABIN IN A NATIONAL
PARK, FAR AWAY.

MICHAEL DEFORGE



COURTESY OF MICHAEL DEFORGE

since his work, which includes the acclaimed 2014 book *Art Colony*. Hailed by many in the industry as a major new talent, DeForge has never had his work in a weekly paper until now. "Sticks Angelica" is a current, ongoing strip in

which DeForge's unique abilities with line, color and character are simply apparent.

On the occasion of his comic's first appearance in *Seven Days*, DeForge spoke with us from his home.

From the Llewellyn Collection, Champlain College Scores a Concert

BY AMY LELLY

Since 2011, Champlain College has been quietly mounting three exhibits a year in Perry Hall that highlight its foremost legacy: Llewellyn Collection. Donated by Burlington artist and Vermontian enthusiast Llewellyn Llewellyn, the most recent of vintage Vermont postcards, maps, and museum items includes 90 years' worth of sheet music—songs by Vermont composers published between the 1850s and the first decades of the 20th century.

An exhibit last September featuring select tunes caught the eye of University of Vermont music history professor WAYNE SCHNEIDER, Assistant in George Gershwin with an interest in popular music. Schneider subsequently perused over the compositions—his wife, PAMELA ELGIN, is a reference librarian at Champlain—and selected 15 pieces to reperform in a concert. Next Thursday, May 22, Schneider will accompany the soprano/tenor couple HARRY and NINA KOSKOFF of Charlotte on a piano duet being hosted in Perry Hall's 5th and 6th Presbyterians Room for the occasion.

During a recent tour of the building's



COURTESY OF THE LLEWELLYN COLLECTION

Seagrained two conference rooms where the collection's changing exhibits are held out. **ELGIN ELGIN**, who began mounting the Llewellyn Collection a year ago, points out a row of framed sheet music covers on one wall.

"There was a whole industry in Vermont of composers and publishers, and a trend of [producing] music for outdoor musicians to play in the home," she explains. Most of the songs cash in on "nostalgia for old Vermont," DeForge



COURTESY OF THE LLEWELLYN COLLECTION

continues, "The market was partly people who had moved away."

But people move apparently already longing for a lost Vermont in 1895, when a Philadelphia press published *White Pine Smugglers* or "When the Apple Blossoms Blow in Old Vermont." Another framed cover aims for modern romance: "White Lake March and Two Step" by Samuel Thomas, published in Passumpsic in 1911, depicts a Victorian crowd of people strolling by a lake in the

moonlight, in set-dress colors. Dennis Schneider for the recent current exhibit, "Marketing Vermont," which is the open to the public before and after the concert.

For the performance, Schneider has chosen songs representing nearly a century of the trend. These include an 1857 love song called "Meet Me Just at the Gate," the Hamiltonian Battle Mountain dedication song from 1881, the 1909 song celebrating the two-century of Lake Champlain's "discovery," and novelty songs. The last category includes two 1930s songs, one called "Up Huh (Manning Vail)" and an old country parlor tune that sounds "a little rock and roll," Schneider promises.

The professor is also the organist and music director of the First Unitarian Universalist Society church in Burlington, and the former director of a church choir in Rome, where he met the bookends. The couple regularly performs musical theater, Schneider calls them "great entertainers."

Until Schneider asked them to perform the vintage Vermont songs, recalls 80. If it had, the couple had better heard of the Llewellyn Collection. When

SEVENDAYS: How would you describe "Sticks Angelica" to readers who've never seen it before?

MICHAEL DEPOSE: It's a comic about a woman who is sort of sick of living in a city, so she decides instead to move to a cabin in a national park, far away. She unfortunately finds that there are a lot of animals who want to befriend her, and she becomes reluctant friends with them.

SD: You've mentioned that you've always wanted your work to appear in an all-weekly paper. Why is that important to you?

MD: Really early on, reading alternative comics was my first exposure to a few different types of artists. It was my first exposure to [Matt Groening's] "Life in Hell!" *Exclaim*, a monthly Canadian newspaper (which unfortunately no longer runs comics), used to run [Mike Bell's] "Shirley and Paul," which ended up being one of my all-time favorites.

I find it easier to grapple with larger stories if I can think of them in smaller

parts. I can sometimes get kind of hung up on dealing with a really huge narrative. Having the time between strips or issues gives me enough space that I can come to things with a fresh mind.

SD: What comic strips most strongly influenced your work?

MD: Well, the aforementioned "Shirley and Paul" is a big one for me. Early on, "The Far Side," "Calvin and Hobbes," "Peanuts" and "Bloom County" were the comics that my parents had lying around, and were sort of how I learned to read. "Bloom County" in particular was a really big influence on me. It was full of topical references that I, of course, didn't understand at that time. I was reading Kerry Ekels's jokes and not really understanding who she was. Years later, I'd still in all these references. ☺

INFO

See the new and other comics in the Fall staff section, pages B4-B6.

MUSIC

The two Preston songs create "a nice, mini-group within our program," Beland adds. "This guy loved chromatic chord progressions and firing the voice and piano into these intricate patterns. It's almost like he was doing musical solitaire."

Schwartz, who previously remembered Rhode Island's short music for a concert there, notes, "Probably every state has a certain repertoire that celebrates it." The value of such music is that it created a shared experience.

"This music is not high art," Schauder notes. "It was popular — not only quantitatively, in that it was widely disseminated, but it struck a responsive chord in the hearts of Americans." The concert, which will end with "Moonlight in Vermont" (from 1944), will likely move a few present-day hearts, too. ☺

INFO

"Songs of Vermont: Celebrating Sheet Music in the Lowelllyn Collection" Thursday May 22, 7 p.m. at the Penitentiarian House at Perry Hall, Champlain College in Burlington. Limited seating; reservations requested by May 15 at rlabeguy@champlain.edu or 524-5831.

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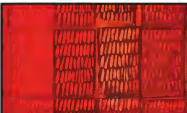
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they hopped a plane to view it, they discovered a surprise.

"Lo and behold, two of the songs were written by Mindy's great-grandfather, Frank J. Preston, who started Preston's Jewell on Church Street," Beland said. "He's an IBM engineer. Mindy runs an equine-care center. The couple had sung Preston's songs many times around the piano at family gatherings but had no idea they'd been collected and cataloged."



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From a New Home, Artist Tad Spurgeon Talks About His Legacy in Vermont

By Brian Chubb and Warren

Tad Spurgeon says he never thought he'd leave Vermont "in a million years." But, despite his profound affinity for the state and the significant artistic strands he's made since his arrival in 1993, Spurgeon packed up his Middlebury studio this spring to follow a longtime love back to his hometown.

"I didn't want to sacrifice Vermont for Philadelphia," the artist admits in a phone call from his new studio in Mount Airy, a northwestern suburb of the city with a walking distance of his childhood home. "But in the end, blood is stronger than water, and I ended up back here."

Spurgeon, 54, leaves a significant artistic legacy in Vermont as a painter of humanistic still lifes, landscapes and other black abstractions, as a teacher and mentor, and as author of a groundbreaking book — none on that in a moment. His first role in Vermont, however, was that of chef.

Just "trying to escape the heat of Philly," Spurgeon found work at gourmet Burlington eatery. Within a year, he says, while working as pastry chef at the Ice House on Battery Street, he developed the chocolate recipes that would

At first I was just looking for a solution, but I became so fascinated by the journey that I decided to become a chef. I'm a chef now.

Tad Spurgeon



Photo: Peacock

Bella Voce Celebrates 10 Years, a New CD and a Collaboration With Robert DeCormier

By Amy Little

Since choral director Anne Williams founded Bella Voce 10 years ago, the 40 women auditioned chorists have gained quite a following. In two concerts a year generally draw full houses. The group has recorded three CDs, and its fourth is due out at its next concert — a 10th anniversary gala, with performances in Burlington and Stowe this weekend.

All credit for the group's success is due to Williams' ability to unite and inspire her singers, according to Williams. She, who has sung in Bella Voce since founding. Eleven years ago, Day was singing in the Vermont symphony orchestra when Williams, its new assistant conductor under founder conductor Robert DeCormier, stepped up to her rehearsal. Day noticed her own presence right away.

"She was so adept and so good at what she was doing and with so much energy," Day recalls. "That I thought, she should have her own chorus. And it should be a women's chorus." At the time there was none in the area. (The Upper Valley has none.) Williams' Bella Voce was founded in 2001 by Dartmouth College



Bella Voce

CLASSICAL MUSIC

music lecturer Brent McKinnon, Bedford has taught night and women's chorus, a community choir founded by Day when she was in 1993.

Day proposed the idea to Williams during a break and discovered that the experienced choral conductor was already making over just such a plan.

With DeCormier's support, Williams drew her first converts to the new chorus from the VSO's ranks. She began rehearsals immediately, and Bella Voce

performed its first concert three months later.

"She keeps this organization moving forward at a very brisk pace," Day comments. "That's not for everybody," she adds. "She does expect a lot from us." Those expectations include fundraising, where needed and mentoring aspiring conductors and music educators. According to Williams, 20 young women have participated in the group's mentoring program.



Anne Williams

Williams has maintained a collaborative relationship with DeCormier, a now 90-year-old Bella Voce has performed and recorded a number of her works, including four of her symphonies on their CD *Christmas Joy*. The new recording, *Songs of Hope & Freedom*, includes DeCormier's six-movement cantata about the African American abolitionist Harriet Tubman, "They Called Her Moses," which takes up more than half the CD.

During a phone call, the ever-elusive Williams reveals that Bella Voce didn't intend to record that cantata, but when the group performed it a year ago,



ART

Todd Thompson

later help Ice House owner **JIM LAFFMAN** launch Lake Champlain Cheesecakes.

In 1991, Spurgeon "left cooling for painting" — he'd been losing his technique in all of the while — and became the first painting resident at the **SHAWNEE CRAFT SCHOOL**. There Spurgeon devoted six years to teaching and painting. In the years that followed, he also mentored artists in private houses, including **BARBARA KIRKMAN**, now a highly successful painter.

"He's just been an incredible resource for so many local artists," says the Farnborough artist, who credits Spurgeon with helping her develop her signature wet medium and her comfortable relationship with color.

Times out, it wasn't just culinary recipes that interested Spurgeon. In the early 2000s, he took a break from

TRACYPURCELLON/IN PINK

WE HAD THIS HUGE OUTCRY. PEOPLE SAID THEY'D LOVE TO HAVE A RECORDING.

DAWN WILLIS

"people were in tears." An anonymous donor initiated a recording fund — the project would cost \$10,000 — and suddenly, Willis found, "We had this huge outcry. People said they'd love to have a recording."

"People just jumped on that band wagon," confides Dag — partly, she adds, "because they wanted to have Robert's music for women recorded." Among the donors to the new CD are Peter Yarrow and Noel Paul Stookey, the remaining members of the iconic American folk group Peter, Paul & Mary. DeCarmar had been the trio's musical director and arranger.

While "They Called Her Moses" will not be performed at the 30th-anniversary concert, Bella Voce will sing another DeCarmar song from its new CD, "Walk Together Children." The composer originally scored the piece for male and female voices, Bella Voce commissioned him to re-write it for women for the occasion.

The group also commissioned a Gloria by University of Toronto music professor Larysa Kuzmenko and a piece called "Women Make the Earth Move" by Lehigh University's Steven Somers. Willis calls that last one a "very fitting" composition for women's voices, percussion and brass. Burlington's **SHAWNEE CRAFT SCHOOL** will accompany the group on the piece, which, in an echo of Aaron Copland's famous work, is subtitled "Fanfare for the Occasional Woman."

The women of Bella Voce, meanwhile, are as solid as ever: "It belongs to a choir that has done as much as it has in the last 10 years is something else," says Dag, who left off singing in the **SHAWNEE CRAFT SCHOOL** society after 22 years to focus on Bella Voce.

As for its spokeswoman leader, she adds, "I don't think anybody could fill her shoes." ☐

INFO

Bella Voce 10th Anniversary Gala Concert
Thursday May 17 8 p.m., at First Baptist Church in Burlington and Sunday May 18, 2 p.m., at Stone Community Church. Info at bellovoce.org

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SEVEN DAYS

FLEMING



STATEofTHEarts

Tad Spurgeon



Mud in the Face

teaching to research hand-worn mediums, oil paint. Spurgeon began experimenting with formulas and techniques that had been disused for several centuries, attempting to capture the qualities he admired in the works of old masters. "I became fascinated with the idea that older painting was inherently different," he explains. The notion of lost those masters' old paintings lacked the way they did because of the paint spread by his artistic worldview. Rembrandt's "Secret," for example, involved using chalk along with oil and pigment.

"After that, I started working with chalk," Spurgeon remembers. "And I was, like, 'Oh! That's very different!'"

Spurgeon turned his discoveries and reflections into a book, titled *Living Craft: A Painter's Process*, which is now in its fourth edition (and available as a download from his website). It's continues to make his own points, and to explore.

"The foundation of his work and the real, true understanding of the materials and process has given him huge control over the manner and the mood of the painting," notes Tina Davidson, co-owner of Steven's *Wet Orange Gallery*. She acquired some Spurgeon paintings when the contemporary art gallery built a wing for representational work earlier this year. "I think he's in more control of painting and the understanding of the process of painting than any other artist I know," Davidson adds.

Characteristically, Spurgeon shared his significant knowledge about oil mediums with his students — many of them accomplished artists themselves. *Steven Adams*, a landscape painter in North Clarendon, says he began using chalk in his paintings after receiving a copy of *Living Craft* from a friend and taking a class with its author. Though she was initially dubious about the medium, she says, she found it "really creates this veil in the way of your skin." It makes the paint move a little better.

Bird says of Spurgeon, "He's presenting these tools to all of us so that we were unaware of, through his own experiments and testing."

Another of Spurgeon's private painting students was MICHAEL STRAUSS, a chemistry professor at the University of Vermont. Spurgeon asked Strauss how much salt he could put in the oil, in hopes that more salt would make the finished product dry more quickly. Strauss told him to use as much as he wanted.

"It was such a simple thing for him to say, but it changed everything," Spurgeon recalls. "I made a super-saturated solution, and suddenly I had no oil that dried overnight."

Strauss subsequently authored his own book, *The Mind at Hand: What Drawing Reveals*, an exploration of how the act of drawing affects consciousness; he devoted a chapter to an interview with Spurgeon. Reached by phone, the professor reveals that the chemistry Spurgeon performs is "actually really complicated. And there are very few people looking at the details of... all these processes he's doing, because it's archaic," he says. "There is no practical use other than to a painter."

Spurgeon says precisely was beside the point of his experiments. "My last reward for doing the research was, it just changed my brain completely," he says. "At first I was just looking for a solution, but I became so fascinated by the journey that the destination became irrelevant."

Now based in Philly, Spurgeon says he's finding visual inspiration in his new Mount Airy neighborhood, which he describes as having an English feel: stucco and stone houses, streets lined with cherry trees that flower in April. He frequently hears from artists around the world who've read his book, and he plans to stay connected with his Vermont friends.

Spurgeon is also forging new creative paths. "There's a lot of work I sort of put on hold because it wasn't really going to fly in Vermont," he says. "Some of the more cosmic, whimsical work that wouldn't go over as well there, so I'm beginning to work on it here" (E).

INFO

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Dear Cecil,

Several years ago I turned in a gun for cash during a police buyback program. For me it was a practical exchange. But do these programs have any impact? Are communities with buybacks experiencing less gun-related injury and/or crime?

Tom in San Jose



Generally speaking, no. Gun buybacks are like a congregation declaring their church a no-idiot-free zone. No doubt it makes them feel virtuous. But the practical impact is nil.

Gun buyback programs operate on the premise that fewer guns in society means fewer crimes, suicides and accidents—or at least fewer deaths from those causes. Many cities have offered buybacks, but studies of their effectiveness almost always find no impact. Examples:

- Neither St. Louis nor Seattle saw reductions in murders or assaults with guns after enacting buyback programs.
- Boston's homicide gun buyback program coincided with a decrease in the city's crime rate, but crime decreased at similar rates in cities without buybacks.
- A multiyear study of Buffalo's gun buyback programs found a reduction in armed robbery using guns, but no significant

difference in other gun-related crime.

- A meta-analysis of gun-related crime intervention methods found buybacks had the least effect.
- So why didn't gun buyback programs work?
 - Most U.S. programs are local and scattered, as opposed to national or area statewide. Since guns can't easily be transported, isolated efforts are not as helpful as the ocean.
 - And buying with a taxpayer at their. Typical hand gun buyback: 1,000 guns. Total guns in the U.S.: 300 million. To put it another way, in 2001 there were 10,000 gun homicides. Given the number of firearms, that means any particular gun has a one-in-30,000 chance of being involved in a killing. On the unlikely assumption that the number of gun deaths is strictly proportional with the number of guns, the typical buyback reduces the death toll by one 30th of one corpse.

- Some take advantage of gun buyback programs to dispose of useless weapons. In Sacramento a quarter of the guns collected were broken, in Seattle, a sixth were.
- Buybacks tend to yield a lot of rifles and shotguns (aka long guns), small-caliber handguns and other firearms not commonly used by criminals or in suicides. In Boston's 1993 and 1994 buyback programs, only 2 percent of the guns returned were large-caliber handguns. Despite substantial new incentives for handguns, in 2006 this figure increased to only 26 percent. A Sacramento study found 60 percent of handguns turned in were small caliber.

No one seriously expects criminals to turn in a gun and deprive themselves of a tool of the trade. Updated, buyback programs take low-risk weapons away from low-risk individuals.

Attempts to improve the effectiveness of buyback programs have met with little success. Unhappy with the response to its earlier efforts,

Boston took several steps to improve the impact of the 2006 buyback—offering a \$200 Target gift card for each handgun (over none for long guns) and providing alternate drop-off locations that weren't in police stations. However, it also required everyone turning in a gun to present ID (to keep out of starters from cashing in worthless old handguns). Results: The turn-in numbers for 2006 were at best no better than in '93 and '94.

Some will say we need a national buyback program. Ignore the fact that such a program is politically impossible in the U.S.—would it work? To get an idea, we can look to Australia, which banned some long guns following a 1996 massacre in which 35 were killed and 23 others wounded by a gunman using assault rifles. As part of the ban, the government launched a nationwide program offering market value for the newly prohibited weapons. The take was 650,000 guns, about 20 percent of the country's firearms.

Granted, Australia was a special case—an island nation can control its borders more

easily than most places. More important, the buyback was attached to a gun ban—those who hang on to illegal weapons faced criminal charges.

Even so, the impact of Australia's program is disputed. One study found no benefits at all, while another claimed the homicide rate decreased 5 to 10 percent. Gun-related suicides decreased significantly, but the overall suicide rate didn't.

True, yet another study credited the Australian buyback with a 75 percent decrease in the gun suicide rate and a 35 to 50 percent decrease in the gun homicide rate. But the evidence for attributing the gun homicide drop to the buyback is unimpressive. Gun and non-gun homicides fell at the same rate between 1995 and 2006. While gun homicides were somewhat more common than the non-gun kind 30 years ago and are less common now, the overall rate happened since 1968, well before the buyback.

This doesn't mean gun buybacks do no good whatsoever. They put a few bullets in the pockets of people like you who want to get rid of unwanted firearms, and conceivably they reduce accidents from "walked-by" guns lying around the house. But overall, do they reduce gun killings, or lifeline people? Don't kid yourself. No.

INFO

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The Scent of Menace

"Holiday Inn, please. The one up by the interstate, not Route 7. I know there's two of 'em."

And with that, the affable, thirty-something fellow hopped into the backseat of my taxi. It was 2:30 in the morning, the heart of Burlington's Saturday night, taxi rush hour. At two, the bars start doing all hell breaks loose.

I turned the cab around to see a couple in the street hailing me a half block ahead. "Mind if I see where these folks are headed?" I asked my customer.

"No problem, dude," he replied. "Make your money."

I pulled up to them, lowered the passenger window and asked, "Where you folks going?"

"Whiffles Road in Winooski," the woman answered.

"Great, guys. In."

Surprisingly, the man directed his partner to step into the backseat while he took shotgun. Normally in these situations, the guy will volunteer to join the stranger in the back, and seat his partner next to the (presumably) less strange and safer cabdriver. Christy.

Glancing over at my brand-new seatmate — a tall, handsome and muscular man — I took him for Russian, or some other nationality with a hearty Slavic population. He had the pronounced cheekbones and blue, slightly slanted eyes common to that ethnicity. These

was also a piercing, guarded quality in his eyes, tinged with bitterness, as if the world was not a safe and welcoming place. A cursory scan of Russian history offers ample reason for such a bleak outlook.

"How are you doing?" he asked me as we drove up Main Street. His accent was indeed, Russian.

"You mean now?" I replied.

The previous week, I had heard an old Vermontian give that response to the young checkout girl at a supermarket and

thought it hilarious. As soon as I left my mouth, however, I recognized that this was probably not a person to joke with. The man had a edge.

He flashed me a look of disdain, leaning back a millisecond, the next thing I knew, he had switched to a broad grin. This was a hard man to read.

"How about you, my friend?" he asked, pivoting to face the man in the back. "What's you do tonight? Do you have fun?"

"Yeah, I hit a few clubs and bars. I guess I had some fun."

"Zat's good, zat's good," said the Russian. "You know what?" he added, his voice suddenly a whisper. "I ate your threat."

"What did you say?" the backseat guy asked. I might have imagined it, but I'd swear I could hear the gulp.

It's hard, but of the five senses, smell carries the most potent emotional charge.

Whether or not that's accurate, that was how the moment felt me: the scent of menace flooded the cab — disturbing, sour and slightly surreal. The fact that it rose out of now here — during a perfectly banal conversational exchange — just intensified the sense of threat.

"Oh, yeah," I said, my eyes now fixed on the road straight ahead. "Did you just say what I think you said?"

"Jesus, Anton," the Russian's girlfriend said blandly, more bored than upset. "What the hell is wrong with you?"

"Oh, is all good, is all good," Anton replied, laughing awkwardly. "We're all friends here. No problem. Cabdriver, why we hating into the Holiday Inn?"

"That's where this first customer is going, mate," I replied, now acutely aware of each word. I was saying, I didn't think Anton was actually a psycho killer, but who knows?

"How much?" the first guy asked, money already in hand. It was obvious he wanted to be out of this cab yesterday.

"I cover him, cabdriver," Anton interrupted. "No problem."

"You sure about that?" I asked. "You're paying this guy out of the fare?"

"No problem," he replied.

While not exactly a direct answer to the question, it was definitive enough for my first customer, who jumped out of the cab with a quick and loud "thanks," and nearly sprinted into the hotel.

Great, I thought, now he can slaughter me with only his girlfriend as a witness. Yes, I was talking to myself, undoubtedly as a defense mechanism. In truth, I was unsure what to think. I just knew Anton was a loose cannon and that I wanted this fare to be over.

We drove the seven minutes to Shamples Road in a weird silence. The girlfriend got out the moment I pulled to a stop in front of their place and walked into the house. Which left me and Anton. Oh, joy.

"So, it'll be 17 bucks. That includes you and the guys dropped at the hotel."

"Why should I pay for that guy?" Anton asked.

"Because you and you would, and I asked you twice."

His lips curled into a half smile. He whispered, "I hit your throat, mate."

In that moment, I somehow knew the threat wasn't real, but I could imagine him punching me in the face and leaving without paying. In any event, the time for silly dillying was over.

I said, "You know, brother, you're being really aggressive and there's no need for it. There really isn't."

"I'm not your brother," he said.

"OK, then," I said. "Well, how about 'comrade'?"

Anton laughed. "Yes, comrade. We canbe comrade." Still chuckling, he took out his wallet, paid me and left the cab.

I shivered like a ternar just out of a pond. Vermont is a haven, not, driving a cab here. I am rarely confronted with dangerous people. But when I am, all I can do is face the situation head on and not shy away. That, and mentally recite the Lord's Prayer. ☺

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PIPE DREAMS

In the battle over natural gas, Vermont Gas may be its own worst enemy **BY KATHRYN FLAGG**

Melanie Peyster was a teenager when her father, Fred, created the work-a-bore at the Addison County Fair and Field Days. "He'd be handing out leaflets on and playing a VHS tape on a loop portraying footage of gas pipeline explosions. "It was terrifying," recalled Peyster, now 66; she just wanted to let the thing go.

"I wasn't worried at all," her 39-year-old son-in-law, Seth Peyster, claimed. "I handed out leaflets on I stood there. My husband worked too much to hard."

Fred Peyster was not around in blocking an underground pipeline proposed in the 1980s to bring natural gas into New England from Canada. It would have cut through the Peyster property in Monkton and stretched some 180 miles through Vermont. "Thinking it was very serious as a business school case study: How Not to Win a Friends While Trying to Build a Pipeline," Susan Levine wrote in a 2000 *Philadelphia Inquirer* story about the conflict. "To be unbiased, of course. Why Does Killing the Governor on Your Side Doesn't Always Help?"

Second family?

History is repeating itself at the Peyster house. This winter, nearly three decades after the last pipeline project, Seth Peyster found himself filing phone calls from a representative of the Canadian-owned utility Vermont Gas Systems.

Turned out, the Peyster property was in the path of a new pipeline — this one the 41-mile Rutland-Rutland Natural Gas transmission line, which needed a stamp of approval from Vermont's Public Service Board in late December. The pipeline will cut through 232 parcels on its journey from Chittenden County in Middlebury — the first leg of a distribution network Vermont Gas hopes to extend as far south as Rutland.

In a telephone message, a "land agent" — tasked with making a deal that would allow Vermont Gas to cross her property — warned Peyster he needed to hear from her sons or Vermont this would begin legal proceedings just a few days later. Peyster received a letter threatening eminent domain, the process by which the government seizes private land for public use while providing "just compensation."

Michael Peyster, the elder, reclusive activist, was living in California during a visit to Vermont in December; she was what was happening in her mother. Her father, who'd handled the couple's legal affairs, died in 2008.

"I basically quit my job," said Peyster, who moved home in March. And "every for me" said Peyster, who holds a law degree, the eminent domain and gas pipeline and right-of-way deals constituted a labyrinthine mess. "I filed it frankly looking," she said. But helping her mother



— and protecting what she sees as her father's legacy — spared Michael Peyster on.

"This is not just an environmental issue, or a financial issue," said Melanie Peyster. "This is a justice issue."

Over a cup of tea on the sunny sitting room at the Peyster's stately Monkton house, the two women spoke about their dealings with Vermont Gas — Seth Peyster growing up, instead, his daughter calming her. "Mom, don't be so angry," Melanie urged her mother.

"It's incredibly stressful," said Melissa Peyster. "It does feel like I'm threatened."

A 'Comedy of Errors'

Friction with Vermont Gas has been bubbling up in lawsuits and court cases all along the proposed pipeline — which was divided into two phases for the purposes of obtaining permits. As the company's land agents took out deals along the Phase I route, the Public Service Board is considering Vermont Gas' application to build Phase II.

That leg would pass through and west from Middlebury, through the towns of Cornwall and Monkton, and then under Lake Champlain. The goal is to deliver gas to the International Paper mill in Ticonderoga. It has promised not only to cover the entire cost of the second leg, but to

help with the building a bigger transmission line from Chittenden County. Although, it is promised to pay in \$70 million. Vermont Gas argues that the money will allow the company to extend service further still — to Rutland County — by 2020. Without IP's contribution, the company estimates, service to Rutland wouldn't be viable until 2035 — "if ever," said spokesman Steve Work.

That's proving to be a tough sell in Addison County, where the proposal touches hot button topics. The real estate market. Pricking property rights. And the patch has' them made some criticism, by a series of lawsuits on the part of Vermont Gas.

Critics allege a pattern of bad behavior. Surveys who requested, or interpreted their own. Broken with Vermont Gas land agents who portrayed themselves as "neutrals" or brokers rather than employees of the gas company; company a rule who left questions about easements unanswered for months; a corporation that pushed for an aggressive schedule in Public Service Board proceedings, leaving landowners and some towns in crisis facing drastic, rushed and overwhelmed. Some testimony of land agents briefly dangling checks in front of land owners in an effort to win "assurances" that would grant Vermont Gas permission to use a landowner's property without purchasing it outright.



Meeting at Sherborn
Elementary School

Just look at how the company handled a statement made by CEO Don Gilbert, who publicly said of the pipeline, "We won't care if people don't want us." In response to discovery questions submitted as part of the PSB process, the company backpedaled: Gilbert was referring to distribution services, not the transmission pipeline itself, Vermont Gas corrected.

"If I was watching from the sidelines as a management consultant, I would say that is a comedy of errors," said Bruce Hildard, the chair of the Cornwall schoolboard. Hildard doesn't live along the proposed route, but he and fellow selectmen have been vocal in their opposition to the project — spurred on, Hildard said, by polls that resulted in Cornwall opposing the pipeline by a ratio of 3-to-1.

"I can't tell whether it's incompetence or arrogance or both," said Ralph Worrick, a Cornwall resident whose property is in the line of fire.

Worrick, by his own pipeline opponents who are chiding the gas company for what many agree was a flawed rollout of the pipeline proposal.

"It does certainly sound to me like it has not been handled as well as it could have been," said Robin Schen, the executive director of the Addison County Economic Development Corporation — a supporter of the pipeline on the grounds that a natural gas will provide a competitive advantage to Addison County businesses. "If they had to do it again, I would guess that they would do it a bit differently," she said of Vermont Gas.

Kevin Ellis, a partner in Montpelier-based PSB firm Ellis M&H, agreed.

"Well, you know something is wrong when a couple of

Unfortunately, it's awfully easy to lose trust, and not so easy to get it back.

RALPH WORRICK

days before Town Meeting, they send out a letter to visit our landowners threatening to take their land by eminent domain," said Ellis. "These kinds of errors are not fixed, but they illustrate a large misunderstanding of what it takes to get it done in Vermont."

The PSB, in its December approval of Phase I, noted that Vermont Gas "has frankly acknowledged that such misconduct occurred" and while the board praised the company's earlier use of a "50-step" toward restoring trust, it urged unless to be "sensitive to the dignity of Vermonters and to respect their rights."

Apologies are falling on the deaf ears of pipeline opponents, who accuse Vermont Gas of begging for forgiveness rather than asking for permission.

"Unfortunately, it's awfully easy to lose trust, and not so easy to get it back," said Worrick.

Jump-Starting the Opposition

Work admits that Vermont Gas didn't expect to face such widespread opposition in Addison County. After all, Vermonters, by and large, generated natural gas with open arms in the 1960s, when Vermont Gas extended its first pipelines carrying fuel from the Canadian border. Instead of angry up-sets, newspapers that ran glowing explosion pieces about the benefit and safety of natural gas, along side underpaid ad salesmen in welcoming Vermont Gas to the state.

In the decades since, Work said, customers have been happy. Their needs have evolved to roughly 10,000 customers in Franklin and Chittenden counties, where underground pipelines serve 15 communities.

But Addison County isn't the Vermont of 50 or decades ago. Residents here have more wary of large utility projects, as, according to Work, as a result of problems stemming from the 2005 Northeast Reliability Project upgrades to Vermont Electric Company transmission lines.

And Vermonters of 1960 didn't have the internet. "These people in Randolph and Montpelier, they're on the web at night," said Ellis. "They're googling pipeline explosions. They understand it inside. They know where the gas is coming from. Thirty years ago, 40 years ago, people had no idea."

The voices of a few angry landowners have now a chorus. Initially "I wasn't up on news about it," said Worrick — but after dealing with his land agent, he said the situation started to feel "bigger."

Pipe Dreams by 22

Down the road, Randy and Mary Martin relaxed and said that they, too, were unlikely opponents. "Our kids are sheltered," said Randy Martin. "We used to think climate change was a bunch of hokey invented by Al Gore!"

West regional environmentalists joined the effort many provided to the hope of building a pipeline to carry fracked gas to a state that had, in 2012, banned by double fracking. In the process of drilling underground for gas and oil, thousands of holes were pumped at high pressure into shale formations. In other parts of the country, the mining technology has been blamed for contaminating water supplies.

Vermont Gas didn't think that a portion of the gas it pumps through its pipelines is fracked, but can't say exactly how much. As for complaints about methane gas on the part of land agents, Work agreed that Vermont Gas didn't stuff up sufficiently to go door-to-door and handle all the customer questions.

So they hired contractors. The right of way agents weren't always "prepared to provide the service level we expected," said Work.

"Let's face it," he said. "With any major project there are going to be issues. Are there people that are angry? Absolutely. Are there people that are quite satisfied? Yes." "There are times when people don't get it right," said Work of the contractors and land agents. — he added that Vermont Gas is bringing many of those complaints back on house. The company added 14 positions last year and plans to hire another 13 people in the coming months.

There's too late for the Addison County landowners who've already had no easements.

Land estate agent Maria Vasquez found out that her property fell on the Phase 1 route by accident. Having been past the Mountain Airhouse, she saw a notice on the road for a meeting that evening with Vermont Gas. Instead, she went to the meeting, where she said a Vermont Gas official told the residents that the company had reached out to every affected landowner. A neighbor had spoken with her a few months earlier, but when she'd asked directly if her home was on the proposed route, the man told her that the route hadn't yet been finalized.

"Two neighbors were sitting right in front of us," Vasquez said. "I heard forward to my two neighbors and said, 'Has anyone talked to you?' Their answer was the same as Vasquez's. "No."

Now, as Vasquez looks out the details of a roughly \$200 million investment with the company, her frustration continues.

"There were lots of questions that we had about the project," she said. She and her partner put them to representatives from the gas company. Would there be blasting on the property? How much work would the company pump need during construction? What would be stored on site? The answers, Vasquez said, were always, "We don't know."

"Sometimes one response to one would say one thing, and one my would say something entirely different," said Vasquez. As recently as last week, after a three-hour meeting with Vermont Gas, Vasquez still didn't have all the information she sought.

Vasquez said that Vermont Gas initially offered her \$2,000 for her easement. Now, after negotiations it's up to \$42,500. Good for her, she notes, but not necessarily for those along the pipeline route who may lack the skills or resources to negotiate.

"What if someone doesn't know to ask questions?" asked Michael Poyer, who is particularly concerned about

other smaller villages in the area. She wants to see the 7,000 set up a fair easement negotiation fund, someone she said, landowners can't rely on the goodness of a corporation to arrive at equitable deals.

In response to complaints that Vermont Gas has no local office here been asked, Work said that the easement negotiations are mostly back checks.

"We need to make people whole, not make someone at the end of the day, not people are getting up the tub," he said.



Pros and Cons

With the PSL Certificate of Public Good in hand, Vermont Gas is getting the final permits to break ground on Phase 1 of its pipeline in June. It has several options (the pressure to economically fill gaps in the half of the 2,100-mile route along the Phase 1 corridor. Mountain Airhouse is working hard to secure the same amount of approval for Phase II.

There are plenty of people recommended to authorize gas. Vergennes residents voted 265 to 340 in a school voting vote in favor of the project. The Addison County Regional Planning Commission on ordered both phases of the project for a single way by the regional pipeline. Large Phase 1 easements will include Agri Work, the producer of Colton

cheese, which has large facilities in Middlebury, Middlebury College, Foster Middlebury Center, and many others. Colton cheese on transport saving as much as \$10 million per year on fuel costs at their plant.

"It levels the playing field for us, for businesses that are thinking about, 'I want to be in Chittenden County or Addison County,'" said Addison County Development Corporation president.

"The benefits of this project are just too big to pass up," said Work.

Try selling that to the angry, frustrated Vermonters who showed up at the Shrewsbury Elementary School cafeteria on May 7 to urge the PSL to deny a permit for Phase II. Many urged anger or was still in with the slogan, "Stop the Fracked Gas Pipeline! Ban it and please!" "Fracked Gas! Let Fracked Gas! Frack Paper!" alongside the school's "Get MLK" advertisements — completed for real estate on the radio.

One after another, opponents stood up to voice their concerns and questions. Would horizontal drilling under Lake Champlain damage trout, sturgeon or the lake bottom? What about the possible damage to the lake's economy? What about the possibility of explosions or accidents along the route itself?

Others argued that rerouting millions of gallons of pipeline to carry fracked gas was an irresponsible choice for Vermont at a time when the state, they said, should be aggressively pursuing renewable energy. That's the position adopted by the Vermont Public Interest Research Group, which is an "independent" in the PSL process. That means it will provide testimony and public input in mid-July hearings.

"By moving forward in this massive investment in fossil fuel infrastructure, we will discourage solar, more sustainable alternatives," said Vermont resident Peter Paul Burns in an interview with Seven Days after the May 7 hearing. Still, others at the meeting ruled against a project that would only provide limited distribution in Shrewsbury and Cornwall, the westmost tip of the gas corridor by the pipeline would be found for International Paper.

"It's our land, it's our community, it's our neighborhood, it's our dairy lands," said Cornwall resident Sam Grubb. "We're being threatened by these two corporations taking our land for the profit of those two businesses, and we resist it."

"I don't understand why I heard their intent is to be recovering Vermontans come along something that's partly for the benefit of a Canadian corporation and a New York corporation," said Timothy Fisher, a Cornwall activist, who returned to his work and he had his hand in his hands.

Anger brewed in pockets of people on the road. They marched and shook their heads when representatives from Rutland and the New York side of Lake Champlain stood up to speak to the main of the project, and the on presence of natural gas service for International Paper. Even the handful of Vermont residents who speak in favor of the project — citing a economic or crisis in the dairy industry and the economic benefits in Shrewsbury's village — faced backlash.

"Some of us from Shrewsbury have been less than half a mile from the line," said Nick Carston. "We live, breathe and sleep with the gas. We even hear the fans wake up call." Carston supported the pipeline on the basis that natural gas would make a drastic cut in greenhouse gas emissions at the 30 plant and in quality for Vermonters on the other side of the lake.

But comments against the project far outnumbered those in support of it. A few landowners from Phase I spoke out — among them Jane Palmer, who bought the 1998, 1-gallon democracy can be bought after all. It's for the money and by the money. "Voters from the crowd seemed around here, and together they shouted, 'We are the people. We are the money. We don't want this pipeline.'"



"There's a certain level of disrespect for people who support the project, and I don't know where that's coming from," said Work after the hearing.

Supporters just don't turn out for public hearings, Work said—in part, he believes, because of the harsh reaction they face.

"We can't lose sight of the fact that while there is vocal opposition, they are a minority," said Work. "People come out generally to oppose an idea or something. They don't come out to support it."

Notably, anti-project—including loudspeakers on the proposed route in Concord and Braintree—didn't speak at the May 3 public hearing; the PRR process prevents them from doing so.

Warwick fills in that story, as he was led from the back of the Shoreham courtroom as others testified. He's representing himself as the PRR lawyer. Earlier in the week, surrounded by stacks of paper at his kitchen table, he spoke of how long and time-consuming the process has been. He's spending at least 10 hours a week preparing documents, filing discovery questions and reading past PRR dockets to prepare for the proceedings.

Vermont Gas is seeking roughly 1,500 feet easement on his 115-acre property in Concord, which he inherited from his parents. Warwick worries about how the pipeline will affect the value of his property, particularly if the shames to subsidence in the future.

But his concern goes beyond property values.

"A big part of my issue is that the way they've behaved on this doesn't make me trust them," said Warwick, a computer and musician. "There's just sort of an arrogance that, 'We've decided to do this, we're going to come through here, and if you don't like it, we're going to make you all over.'"

He said that right off way again more pointed their address in early dealings with him, claiming they didn't work for Vermont Gas and instead were "volunteers." Down the road, Randy and Mary Martin had similar complaints, and again showed up at their doors in November 2011, along the couple for rights to survey their land. They said they were told to "keep this to yourself."

Like Warwick, the Martins said they've turned over countless hours to represent themselves in the PRR process, a lawyer just isn't financially feasible for either family.

"We don't have that kind of money," said Randy Martin, who runs an insurance agency with his wife out of their home on Route 74.

A Tale of Two Counties

Perhaps, looking for a warmer welcome, Vermont Gas tried off-site series of three open houses in Rutland County last last month, setting up camp for an evening at Rutland High School to hear the benefits of natural gas. They're calling the project as "Phase III" and hope to ferry gas to Rutland by 2020.

We can't lose sight of the fact that while there is a vocal opposition, they are a minority.

People come out generally to oppose or complain about something. They don't come out to support it.

Steve Work

That's been the goal all along. In Rutland, economic development officials hope cheaper fuel could create new businesses and revive existing ones. As such, not early—and often—could these really help Vermont Gas seal some of the turmoil they've faced in Addison County.

And so 10 off Vermont Gas employees trickled from their South Rutland headquarters to Rutland in late April. The idea starts—Vermont Gas employees—very outnumbered the few visitors who trickled in. Employees

emerged tables outfitted with placards reading "About Vermont Gas," "Safety" and "How much can I save?" A few were stationed by the door, ready to greet visitors.

"We're hoping to promote a little bit of excitement," said one. Nearby, a large poster promised "We stand ready to serve you with 24/7 service."

Plenty in Rutland are already quite excited about natural gas. Among them is Tom Delaney, a local businessman who stopped by the open house to salute the town out.

"I know Rutland needs clean, efficient fuel for both the homes and the businesses, and this gas line is a good prospect," said Delaney, who was chatting with Tom Donahue, the executive vice president and CEO of the Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce.

"We, Rutland, we can't look back and wait," said Donahue, looking through examples of recent manufacturing job losses in Vermont. "We want to help our businesses."

Some themes cropped up repeatedly among the few visitors. Several mentioned the long winter and the high price of heating fuel. Vermont Gas officials, in turn, talked up the cheap price of natural gas. By mid-July, a Vermonters who burns 1,000 gallons of fuel oil at the current price of roughly \$1.40 a gallon would save just shy of \$2,000 a year. Many spoke warily of the infrastructure already in place in the state of them. "They have the infrastructure, they have the rail, they have the bus service," said Donahue.

The subject here as the pipeline.

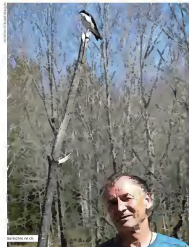
But Phase III won't get built before Phase II, and opponents are optimistic that they could block the TransCanada bond pays. They wanted the "public good" that provided at the first phase isn't obvious in the case of the second, because its biggest beneficiary is a New York corporation.

"I think we have asked," said Warwick. "I think they're short themselves in the face to many times that they're a little worried."

Vermont Gas doesn't agree. If the company's current permits for Phase II, construction could begin next year.

"When projects are done, the more stories to submit," said Work. "Finally, I think in two years, that will be long forgotten."

It's a more realistic. "It means you on the long run" he said of companies that view their PRR process as a "group card." "What you want in 10 years is for these people to say, 'OK, we fought, we lost, but at least the company respected us and listened to us.'"



animals have the same interpretation of the sentiment that our culture coopts with the little but potent phrase "There's no place like home."

The subject of hearing, Heinrich says, interests him because "it's so central to so many things that make an animal the way it is, it's central to its life." That fascination comes through in the book, which, with its diverse array of unusual case studies, compellingly argues that home is one of the chief organizing patterns by which animals on Earth live their lives.

About a hundred pages in, Heinrich poses "the ultimate and perhaps unanswerable" question of his book: When animals employ such techniques as

magnetic field detection, pheromone transmission or astronomical navigation, are they conscious of where they are and what they are doing? Or do all of these remarkable capabilities exist solely on the preconscious or unconscious levels?

In conversation, Heinrich does not profess to know the answer to that question, which interests with still-underexplored subjects such as the very nature of consciousness. As in his other work, the author is *unafraid* to take on such huge questions as these. The power of his informed, engaging book to instill a sense of wonder is a testament to Heinrich's sensitivity to his subject matter. **B**



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



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Rainbow Connection

Theater review: *Ozma of Oz: A Tale of Time*

BY ENIK ESCHLSEN



Local Pappas as Dorothy bangs with puppet, BOB THE COWARDLY LION

More built old enough to remember 1900's *The Wizard of Oz* can be forgiven a certain weariness about a production of playwright Susan Zedler's *Ozma of Oz*. Her play premiered in Seattle just a year following the release of *The Wizard of Oz*, a film event that provided show-biz with a customary tale about messing with the children's fantasy world of it. Frankly, when the Broadway stage version of *The Wizard* was a Tony-winning hit, not even the star power of Michael Jackson and Diana Ross could spare the film rendition its grubby demise at the box office and in the press. Moreover, recent adaptations have alternately hit and missed.

Perhaps *The Wizard* lesson is that film adaptations of the Oz franchise are a risky business, especially in light of the

transcendent 1939 film that lingers like some Jungian archetype in the collective American pop-culture consciousness. Zedler's drama, by contrast, seemed acerbic as a work of children's theater and continues to be staged around the world to this day. The Bards & Poets Production Company is currently staging *Ozma of Oz* in Burlington at the Black Box Theatre of the Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center.

Directed by Susan Christopher, this production takes on a current run at the curious Oz without, based on the third book in Bauer's series. Some of the troupe's most consistent players join two youth actors — Chantel Valley Union High School sophomore Lucy Pappas in the lead role of Dorothy Gale and seventh-grade senior

Stella Pappas in three supporting roles — as an energetic production propelled by strong characters and pitched to the target-audience and up.

What scene — or moment — young audiences might make of the play is difficult to gauge, though playwright Zedler herself, in an interview in the *Seattle Chronicle*, said she envisioned the play "and wished" and still is worth of "to reuse." The plot takes a lot of trippy twists and turns, but they're sometimes too wacky for their own good — and sometimes not super fun.

Ozma of Oz opens with teenage Dorothy accompanying her Uncle Henry, whose ill health turns her into a wheelchair, on an excursion to Australia for curative rest. She's none too pleased to be traveling with the old grump — instead of hanging out

with her boyfriend back in Kansas — and isn't shy about saying so. When a storm wrecks the ship, Dorothy and Uncle Henry are tossed overboard and separated. Alone on a raft over her a talking chicken named Bill, Dorothy discovers an avianic moral key with a mysterious inscription. She also rediscovers a sense of freedomal responsibility to Uncle Henry — just in time to make landfall, where he has arrived before her.

More discoveries await them in the strange land. The first is a character named The Tin, a self-described time machine — a clock man, basically. The Tin informs Uncle Henry and Dorothy that they have reached Oz and that, because they have freed him from his rock prison, time is now running again — with profound implications. They will resume yielding to night in its natural motion, which is the condition that the subterranean Green King, Bogquet, requires for his nocturnal way to run rampant aboveground. All hell will break loose. Worst of all, living things will once again age.

THE RAMBLING, POLLOCKING TALE CAN BE DIFFICULT TO PIN DOWN FROM SCENE TO SCENE, BUT SOLID ACTING ANCHORS THE PRODUCTION.

Enter the Wicked! These menacing creations as sisters (Bibi Rothel and Jenny Gandy) seem intent on harming Dorothy, Uncle Henry and Bill — and they notice Uncle Henry's wheelchair. They mistake him for their ruler and let us the young slave. At this point, Dorothy, Uncle Henry, Bill and The Tin set off on a journey that brings them into contact with eccentricity: Princess Langwathien, Bogquet and the play's title character, Ozma. The story gets sticky ends with a set of tidy resolutions about approving people for who they are and the value of moral, multifaceted life versus idyllic, anchoring immortality.

The rambling, pollocking tale can be difficult to pin down from scene to scene, but solid acting anchors the production. As Dorothy, Lucy Peppas turns in a confident performance that matches the more experienced cost members' energy and intensity in the dense meat of the dramatic heavy lifting. She plays the only major character not imbued with either or alternatively quirky, and we look to her to make some sense of the gongs-on.

Peppas' performance is all the more impressive when viewed alongside those

of vibrant local actors. Rick Hansen is credibly masqué as Uncle Henry, but he and Peppas also sell a couple of key moments of tenderness. Other players busy Ozma of Oz with broad-stroke comic relief. Carl Berkman, playing Princess Langwathien, gives a lively performance as the befuddled — and misfounded — villainess who changes her sugar to salt her meal, and holds Dorothy and company hostage for a spell. Kerry Conner is the princess' dour, handsomeness. Needs (in addition to playing two other roles).

Both Jaron inhabits the villain Bogquet in what appears to be David Bowie's costumed duds from his Ziggy Stardust days — a highlight of costume designer Catherine Allen's work — and effects a humorously gloom personae. At the other extreme, the precariously funny Ozma, played by Princess Jaron, gets laughs for her irrepressible optimism as she moves about the steps in life, lily-like steps. The drier the circumstances become, the more delighted a heroine Ozma appears. One lesser delight of Billie Burke's Glinda the good witch from The Wizard of Oz in her high-pitched, over-the-top vocal range.

Santa & Pesto's signature contribution to local theater since the company's founding in 2000 has been intricately combining puppets and live performance. In Ozma of Oz, however, only two puppets make the scene: Bill the chicken, played by Marianne DeMoss, and the owl and built by Kevin Christopher, and The Tin, played by G. Richard Ames. While DeMoss and Ames are known and respected theatrical talents, their roles in this play come off a bit muted, which deprives the show of elements a spectacle that might appeal to young audiences. In general, Ozma of Oz has slightly underproduced.

Again, it had may use things differently — and suspend disbelief more readily — at any rate, this production has a high standard of professionalism through committed performances from a deeply talented cast. Every Santa & Pesto show has taken hold creative risks, and Ozma of Oz is no exception. The production may be a little ho-hum, in other theaters of this play have been, by a script that even its author felt was rushed to the stage on time. Even so, characters who we attend this Ozma will get a taste of the boundless imagination of author Baum, whose body of work extends in all kinds of wacky directions. D

INFO

Ground for A Tale of Time, written by Susan Zeller based on characters created by L. Frank Baum, directed by Kevin Christopher produced by the Santa & Pesto Production Company. Thursday through Saturday. May 11/12 at 7 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday May 11/12 and 12 p.m. at 2 p.m. at 2000 Oak Street at Mile Station Landing Performance Arts Center in Burlington. \$45-60. lennys.com

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Cabaret Conductor

From Weimar to blues, Tchaikovsky to hip-hop, Spielplatz's music director mixes it up

BY ERIK AN DE BRUIE



Left: Jeffery Lund

Spielplatz Cabaret occupies a unique place in Vermont's arts landscape. No other entertainment venue can boast a similar slate of influences—Weimar-era cabaret, vaudeville and “legitimate” theater—or of a sensibility that as spiritedly embraces queer performers as professionalism and success.

Spielplatz has attained “institution” status in Burlington: This year’s production is the troupe’s 11th. And, judging by those in attendance at the first of its seven 2016 performances, the work-force is likely to continue at least as many groups as newcomers.

Spielplatz’s shows are perhaps best known for the witty banter of Phyllana Brown as Maxwell, the master

of ceremonies, and for their gazebo displays of both male and female polychitude (and flesh). But the crux of the Spielplatz Cabaret band lies like the show: together. Playful and professional, historically accurate and refreshingly modern, the band is the venue’s secret weapon.

General Shapiro, 26, is the show’s musical director, a position he’s held for four years. He’s also a composer, along with Sound and Spielplatz collaborator/dancer/singer Lois Trumbull. To charter as Dr. Richard “Doc” Ederheim, Shapiro plays saxophone and leads the six-piece band. He arranged most of the music for the show’s many numbers and vignettes, and contributed 10 original

songs. Shapiro may well be the busiest member of the troupe.

One of his chief challenges directing the rest of the band while he plays out “I’m often conducting with my instrument while I’m playing,” he says.

Shapiro draws on a remarkable variety of musical styles for his compositions, and arranges them. Though the touchstone is the music of the Berlin cabarets of the 1920s and ’30s, he incorporates numerous other influences in his lively, engaging scores. The first act alone features songs that derive in part from traditional Russian music, American guthrie blues and Tchaikovsky. The second act’s accompaniment borrows from the work of musical luminaries Tom Lehrer. Here and there during the show,

you’ll even hear the drummer playing a breakdown.

That diversity itself is historically accurate, as Weimar cabaret shows were known for their generous appropriation of both “high” and “low” artistic forms. Shapiro finds the artistic-historical moment represented by cabaret culture immensely appealing. “It’s still on the cusp of and just, so it’s a very exciting time period,” he says. “It has a little bit of a darker sound.”

He adds, “Even though we do keep it as ‘period’ as we can, there are still hip-hop influences creeping in, and later jazz influences creeping in, because that’s what other cool numbers are in turn of it, and it draws the audience’s attention.” A friend of Shapiro’s dubbed

Spizgalster's artistic approach "musical historical fiction" — that is, playing historically accurate instruments in a somewhat anachronistic style. That genre is central to Spizgalster's aesthetic.

But historical authenticity can come with a price, Shapiro acknowledges. The acoustics in Burlington City Hall Common Auditorium are not well suited to the joyful noises of this troupe's actors and musicians. "The room is designed for twin meetings," he notes. "And there are arches all along the ceiling — I think they're actually designed for hearing whippers and keeping them out of the corner of the room."

If this arrangement is actually appropriate for hushed political chamber, it's a liability for shows like Spizgalster, in which the music competes for attention with performers squalling and singing. The final outcome of several numbers were rendered almost legible by the room's acoustics.

"Part of us trying to be 'period' is not using handheld microphones," Shapiro says. "And we use no electric instruments. We are trying to keep it as 18th as we can." (That said, Nate Vener's piano is electric.)

Even though it's largely unamplified, the band does sometimes overpower vocal performances. Perhaps it's time to subscribe just a tad of historical authenticity in order to provide their patrons with a more complete experience.

Vanderbill's modular structure does not lend it to coherent narrative; instead, that's its chief distinction from "proper" theater. In Spizgalster's current show, a few narrative elements recur in multiple numbers, but not in a particularly safe (and easy) way. Either an experiment with a fuller storyline or a wholly narrative "novel" format would be welcome. That the acoustics in the hall are so poor exacerbates the narrative's spotty nature, as many plot elements were either inaudible or incomprehensible.

At Spizgalster, though, the music itself holds a narrative function,

Shapiro's lively arrangements for sax, trumpet, piano, accordion, mandolin, harp, drums, bass and tuba — half the musicians frequently swing out instruments — give structure to the proceedings. They draw on eclectic music, rock songs and foppery era jazz to suit the moment.

The first act takes number, a raunchy performance by Trombly of George Kinski's and Fletcher Henderson's "Send Me to the 'Electric Chair,'" was a sinky, gruff crowd-pleaser. The second act dance "Protagonist Express" was especially blueprint, and not just because of all the music. In both of those highlights, the music carried the day.

The hedgepodge of influences on the current show and on Spizgalster in general tends to be an asset, thanks to the musical arrangements and performances. But it could be a liability in less capable hands. Shapiro seems to grasp that cabaret's magic approach is essential to its appeal.

"[Cabaret is] sort of this meeting point," he explains. "Act now, you believe it, act now right after it, with expressionism right in the middle. There are those elements of those very classical set forms — and the weirder, the expressionist, the dark. There's a punning for audiences and for understanding the mechanical world, and the show reflects that," he adds. "There are very beautiful, symmetrical, consonant moments, and there are these very dark and chaotic moments."

Like all successful variety shows, Spizgalster's current production is genuinely varied — particularly in its vocal, enchanting music. **B**

INFO

Spizgalster Cabaret, Thursday through Saturday May 19 to 21 8 p.m., with "Protagonist Express" on Friday and Saturday at 9 p.m., Burlington City Hall Common Auditorium. \$10 (over 21); \$20 (day of show); \$25 (early bird).

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Pulling a Fast One

A new fitness trend just might row, row, row your boat

BY SARA HOFF



A photo by John W.

I've never been a big fan of the Pelos, but on a recent surprisingly sultry evening in Burlington's South End, the final strains of "Message in a Bottle" seemed especially appropriate to the workout I was enduring. Just as Sting was "banging out an SOS," I wanted to send out my own—for someone to rescue me from this soul-draining machine. Really, in the fitness class, it was making me a little dizzy, nauseated, exhausted and bored all at the same time.

"It is a rowing machine—but not just any old ergometer that's been gathering dust in the corner of a gym. Michael Blouatt, who launched the new indoor rowing studio New VT on Flynn Avenue last month, promised me that this "fun,

interactive machine" would hit 84 percent of my muscle mass and burn up to 600 calories in a 45-minute class.

"Rowing" builds your body without adding "the bulk," Blouatt added. He said it brought to the classic aerobic workout a fresh focus on team building and challenge, while the ergonomic, geared "stroke" meant get-into-and-out-of-ease, feeling better with a big smile and positive outlook.

By investing exclusively in water-based rowers for the studio, Blouatt is riding the wave of one of the latest fitness trends. As the *New York Times* reported last fall, the old boys' sport of rowing has become a new way to get ripped, thanks to the popularity of Concept2—which incorporates rowing

machines in some workouts—popularly from "The Biggest Loser" and the new patch-up-of-ghost-mane-and-intervale Caldas including Cameron Diaz and Kevin Bacon are on board, as are hundreds of gym networks.

Blouatt emphasized the spunk of rowing: row on a drag-of-blouse hearts row in high school—and, once rowing, having endured the rain-soaked pulling session of Concept2—I was wary of trying New VT. Besides, with rising temperatures outside, a good old-fashioned row was beckoning. Despite my misgivings, Blouatt's space at Tao Motion Studio, with its hardwood floors and happy crew of devoted rowers, was warm and welcoming.

"The class is intense, but Blouatt's

fantastic motivator and excellent teacher," said Tracy Mitchell, a 47-year-old Vermont resident who also does Karate at Tao Motion. "The water-based rowing machines are unique and put a different element into the class."

Ah, the water-based rowing machines. Unlike traditional ergometers, or ergs, which have vertical flywheels and chains, the machines on which I found myself found has a horizontal flywheel with water sloshing around in the inside. This WaterRower, I later learned from the company's website, was designed in the mid-1980s by a former Yale University and U.S. National Team rower "to emulate the exact dynamics of a boat moving through water."

The machines are made from ash, cherry and other hardwoods in Warren, R.I., which makes them relatively local and sustainable — a nice touch. I appreciated the soft foam grip of the handles.

But as Blount, sporting a stylish turquoise halter-neck, red-leather top and grey shorts, began the class, the raccoons failed. Among to catch my cadence — or stroke per minute — to that of the other students, I was totally distracted by the motion of the water. Then Blount instructed us to hop off for “hybrid mobility” work.

That’s another key difference between today’s rowing movement and those of years past. Instead of spending thousands of tedious minutes on the machine, we were alternating between intervals of 500 meters and exercises such as forward bends, push-ups, squats and planks.

“As the intervals got shorter, the rowing got higher,” captured Blount. Sure enough, after we’d picked up speed for the next rowing session, we found ourselves gasping through “mountain climbers” and reverse lunges.

“I wanted to create an effective workout that’s fun, competitive and easy to learn with a low risk for injury,” Blount told me after the class. He grew up in Middlebury playing football, basketball and lacrosse, and then studied business management and exercise science at Gordon State College. His business for rowing came later. “My first memory of being on a rowing boat,” 30-year-old Blount says, “was not a pleasant one.” Blount admitted with a laugh, “I don’t remember what kind of speed I had back then, but I clearly remember telling my workout partner that if I passed out, please note my time!”

While working as a trainer last fall in Beverly Hills, Calif., however, Blount witnessed how water-based rowing machines, along with the hybrid workouts developed for them (now branded as Indo-Row and Shockrow, among others), could combine the benefits of strength training, Pilates and flow yoga with cardiovascular conditioning. He now offers four types of classes at Row VT, from the entry-level Signature Row, which reviews technique and form, to the Endurove session that spans 3,000-meter boats. Mixing exercise fun and removing the intimidation factor are key, he said.

During the Shockdown class that I attended, I eventually adjusted to the

movement of water in the machine and found myself focusing instead on the screen that displayed my time. I tried to beat my own numbers each time. I stopped on the spot. When we moved over to the mats for core squats and mountain jumpers, the shift added just the right amount of variety.

By the end of the 45 minutes, I was ready for the relay challenge. Sheri Senzuc and Brenda Cavanaugh versus me and Rachel! To the sounds of Miley Cyrus’ and Ryan Lewis’ “Can’t Hold Us,” we furiously moved through two sets of 250 meters. Senzuc and Cavanaugh beat us by just a few meters.

“I’m not a competitive person, and to have to compete while exercising was not appealing to me,” confided Senzuc, 45, of Colchester, after our race. “But with Miley’s gentle nudge and the idea that I’m challenging myself to do better each time — not to beat the others in the class — the reward is taking me out of my comfort zone.”

Burlington yoga teacher John Howe Sullivan, 38, and she has found the rowing classes an ideal complement to her own practice. “The studio is beautiful, very NYC without being pretentious,” she wrote in an email. “And Mike is energetic without being crazy and annoying!”

Row VT regular Steven Kind, 50, of Essex, and he appreciates Blount’s “holistic approach to his various workout programs” finding it a good match for his own lifestyle, fitness goals and schedule.

As for me, by the end of the class I was no longer sweating out an 800 but enjoying the water-based machine, the camaraderie and Blount’s motivating workout. The experience turned the tide of my feelings about indoor rowing — even though I might choose real water on Lake Champlain over the stuff inside a flywheel during the warm months ahead. I’ll bet that Blount — who’s way more engaging and generous than my old high school crew coach — will be at Row VT when the cold returns, and long after that. His goal is to establish his studio as a leader in the industry by integrating music, nutrition coaching, pacing, goal setting and team-building into the program.

“I really want to inspire others to live a healthy and fit lifestyle, improving every day,” he said. “I hope to create a ripple effect in the community.” ☐

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Stowe Special

First Bite: Plate, Stowe

BY ALICE LEVITT

In one way or another, restaurants in Stowe often are descended from the town's roots. Chef's move downtown from the mountains, and former hotel managers try out their own independent dining concepts, all bringing a bit of the thick stories of big business with them.

Plate, which opened on Stowe's Main Street on March 12, is an anomaly. The small, dinner spot is actually descended from an even smaller restaurant called Janey's on Main. Jamie Persky and her husband Mark Sommer sold their breakfast and lunch destination in 2011. Now they're back with a new restaurant, right across the street, bringing a breadth of fresh California fare.

California cuisine, a style of cooking based on the simple practice of cooking out in the garden and gathering beautiful ingredients, may not seem like a natural fit for a Vermont town that's known when covered in snow. But Plate chef Aaron Martin has cooked at both Berkeley's Chez Parness and Vermont's Hies of the Wood. His localist CV helps him do both-state justice, even if he can't peak fresh plates in his Alamo Winter just yet.

The result is a unique fusion — call it Stowe cuisine — that is sometimes very successful, but not always. While making it tend on a recent Thursday at Plate was hard, a heavy hand with sugar weighed down some dishes.

Word of a new destination gets around quickly in Stowe. I went out myriads trying to talk over the din of the busy restaurant. Both Persky and our server were friendly and helpful, but often I'd call to hear.

The rising crowd was diverse: A cross from me, an older couple sat next a young family, whose mother was a group of young women out for a ladies' night. Take them, I was joined by one of my best friends, who celebrated with a newly made Silver Margarita, complete with housemade sour mix and a run of spicy expensive salt.



Chef Aaron Martin with owners Jamie Persky and Mark Sommer at Plate in Stowe

The cheese is a much-debated item between a cocktail and one of the cult brews available on draft, on cans or in bottles. Most were from Vermont or California, but Oregon, Germany and Quebec were also represented. While we were mostly American, in-flight options available via Conquest, a recent conversion that allows restaurants to pour wine from the bottle without removing the cork and letting it oxygen.

All our fellow guests were well groomed and dressed, so if they'd been locally cooked to fit in with the handsome dining

room, polished with dark wood and artfully hung with bits of bare light bulbs. Even the bathrooms were aesthetically pleasing, with museum-worthy sinks. Vintage photos of Walt Disney and Clark Gable and a highly decorated "Halls of the Network State" poster made me giggle.

Last at a look for the open kitchen, but was quickly done and from the fiery action by the arrival of my breadbasket. We knock on the confidence of Red Hen Fasting Company, but if doing so leaves in the hands of nearly every higher and Vermont restaurant can get inclusive. The

mostly housemade breads at Plate is, read more variety.

Notably was nothing unique my of Stowe. For Jan's Perseus Craps, the Stowe ended on a high of Red-wedgeth, cranberries, rosemary and ground fennel. But Plate baker Barbara McLean. I liked the breadbasket with her own snappy sauce, along with a cake like, herb-speckled cornmeal and patty slices of fresh pork. Spread with sweet, cinnamon tinged butter, the assortment was inevitable.

STOWE SPECIAL 49/49

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SIDEdishes

BY ALICE LEVITT



Spin Me Good Morning

ON MONDAY, **CAFE & BAKERY** COMES TO BURLINGTON. **PHOTOGRAPHY** didn't have to go far to find the perfect spot for her new business. The former owner of Peas Cafe at N Center Street in Burlington and her partner, **ANDREW MACLEAN**, will open **DURHAM FARMER'S CAFE & BAKERY** just east door at 11 Center Street, in the former Kents Golf Shop. The pair is currently waiting on renovations to add a kitchen to the space, with a plan to open in June.

Despite the Swings' Blue local geographic proximity to the Peas space (and **REPUTATION** BYWORD), its offerings will be miles away from the bubble tea Piotrowski served at her former cafe. **MACLEAN**, a graduate and former **Christophe's** on the Green sous chef, has spent much of his career cooking at guest ranches out west, as a western theme will inform the cafe. "We're going to have a twist on traditional breakfast and lunch fare," says Piotrowski.

Maclean also specializes in European pastries,

but don't expect him to adhere too closely to tradition. His pastries will be staffed, breakfast sandwich-style. Morning diners will also be able to choose from sweet and savory entrées. At lunch, Maclean will introduce Burlington to the waffles, which Piotrowski describes as a daily "waffle popper" with fillings such as maple, bacon and krus.

Drink specialist Piotrowski plans to have fun with the western theme, she says. That means serving cowboy coffee. "A strong, smoky" sip made by heating coarse grounds campfire-style right in the pot.

Once open, the Swings' Photograph will serve breakfast and lunch every day but Monday. On Saturday evenings, Center Street's western theme will intensify with country swing nights.

Red Dawn

LOCATIONS WILL OPEN ON **REVENUE** AT 11. A few years ago, **CHERYL STENO** left Vermont for the first time to attend La Guardia High Institute of Culinary Arts in Pittsburgh, Penn. Now, two



Cheese sandwich on a waffle from Little Red Kitchen.

years after graduating, the Burlington native is opening a restaurant at her own.

Steno is the new owner of 505 Riverside Avenue, former home of Supremacy, which served adults and sandwiches to commuters for a decade. She plans to open **LITTLE RED KITCHEN** in the last week of June, and is currently hard at work renovating and clearing the building to her exacting standards.

Little Red Kitchen will combine the local focus of its predecessor with a classic delicatessen concept. "She wants to bring deli fast food

to Burlington, but really good deli fast food, on the edge of gourmet," says Steno's friend **MARIA KING**, who is helping her with production.

During her time in Pittsburgh, Steno built a following by manufacturing a range of gourmet dips and sandwiches spread that were sold at local markets.

These spreads will appear on paninis and sandwiches at Little Red Kitchen. "People will call me from Pittsburgh saying, 'We're addicted to your Pannini Spread,'" Steno laughs. Other specialties, such as maple pecan butter, will be sold in the kitchen's gourmet shop.

Steno says that encounters at **LENNY'S BROTHERS** and the **TRAPP FAMILY LODGE** helped her build connections with local farmers. She'll use their wares in both standard deli sandwiches and

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Stowe Special 47-48

I would have been happy to go home after filling up on bread, but the appetizer arrived while I was still fixating on my carb cloud. The rectangular plate of "crispy pig belly" placed before me was smothered in a magenta-crover. Cubes of pork belly and potato had been bathed in a dark, sweet sauce, then decorated with artfully chopped scallion fronds, a single dill sprig and two halves of a broken hard-boiled egg.

I topped the crisp little potatoes, but found the pork belly under-rendered. Some cubes were still glistening fat with no meat. The pork-and-egg pairing reminded me of an egg Filipino breakfast dishes popular on the West Coast. But the fatty meat with an overripe sauce cried for lightening up, perhaps with a few fresh veggies or a hint of acid.

The ramp-and-green-pea soufflé was equally photogenic, if dishearteningly dense. The flowers in the dish's description didn't pay the way I had expected, though the taste of ramp-on soup was regal. An indulgent mushroom cream sauce was a bit heavy but delicious — my dining partner and I quickly dispatched the soufflé despite its imperfections.

The Jester's on Green salad broke up the heaviness. But oddly, this salad contained raw greens, in error. Penny later told me that the mixture of sparkling fresh spring greens, sweet-potato cubes, cauliflower seeds, dried cranberries and feta was dressed in "1909" dressing.

A full before our steaks appeared gave us time to breathe following the breakfast service of our bread and eggs. In keeping with the California theme, I'd ordered the Market's Puke Diet-style take on osso: In the place of what moosles indeed, the chef serves up a dense tangle of spaghetti squash.

This substitution took only works if you are really, really serious about your diet. I learned not your when I went low carb that chunky strands of squash don't satisfy a craving for glutinous noodles. In Puke's ruses, Maria helped make up for the



CUBES OF PORK BELLY AND POTATO HAD BEEN BATHED IN A DARK, SWEET SAUCE, THEN DECORATED WITH ARTIFICIALLY CHOPPED SCALLION FRONDS.

deficiency of his "noodles" with a kani-on coconut breeze dotted with olive oil. On top was a mountain of veggies: broccoli, cabbage, mushrooms, and red and green

peppers. All were nicely cooked, but a few were divided in scrambling that gave them an unbecome sweetness — particularly in an already-sugary broth. My dining companion found the dish unimpressive. I was more satisfied with the burger.

Lightly smoked before grilling, the patty offered a melt of flavor that cascaded into the browning, creamy-onion sauce coating my palate. When a burger is very messy, I can't in good conscience describe it as well constructed. This one dissolved into a

puddle of beef and sauce as soon as I cut it in half. But damn, it tasted good.

My homemade chicken bun, speckled with sesame seeds, was picture-perfect. The homey layer served as a sponge for the moist beef, a layer of shredded, the special sauce, and the juice of the tangy pickles served on the side. I felt less than elegant digging in, but I let the sauce coat my face and hands as I did.

Place has no fryer, so instead of traditional fries, I was given a choice of sides with my burger. Pan-fried potatoes or grilled sweet potatoes would have been an obvious choice, but I went instead with the not-quite-smooth cauliflower-pots to finish.

Stopping fries made it a little easier on my conscience to order the banana pudding for two. Served in a giant Mason jar, the pudding really could have served three or four modest eaters. Nevertheless, my friend and I eagerly finished it even after those appetizers and two steaks.

Besides the breakfast and lunch, this dessert was the highlight of the meal. Heavily flavored pudding came layered with chunks of fresh banana, milled walnuts and whipped cream. More than walnuts protruded from the top of the soft structure like a pair of jaunty horns.

The simple dessert was perfectly executed. It was far from the light, airy dishes that often define California cuisine, but, in true West Coast style, its primary ingredient sang like the star it should be.

Place will have to repeat that last with some of its other dishes before it can assume the exalted place in Stowe's dining scene that its name evokes. The flavors of its ingredients should be allowed to stand out independently rather than being cloaked in an overbearing heavy or sugary sauce. As more quality produce becomes available in the warmer months, I'll look forward to Puke's sampler, farm-fresh meals. ☺

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SIDEdishes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 45

specialties such as blackened chicken, Caprese sandwiches and cheese sticks.

Stevens will have her business hours on the needs of the community — which includes a steady stream of rush-hour commuters. “I’ve just been taking all kinds of suggestions and taking them to heart,” she says.

Early Riser

CALIFORNIA GROWS TO GO BUT NEW CORN WAS ONLY AT 10:00 A.M. The message on the back of CALIFORNIA 3-PURVEY latest product comes from JACK LARCHER of BUTTERWORTH FARM. “For the past 40 years, our family has been putting the care of the Earth first and farmers in our lives. We have

taught countless other organic farmers the value of growing food more than we take,” Larcher writes.

EARLY RISER CORN WHISKEY takes something from Larcher — namely, his corn — but **TOMMY HANDEKE**, founder of Caladonia Spirits, is determined to use the limited-edition whiskey to give something back to this farmer who has contributed so much to Vermont’s food system. On Saturday, May 24, at 1 p.m., Caladonia Spirits’ facility in Hardwick will host a release party for the whiskey to help Larcher, who is uninsured, pay for insurance related to his career and kidney failure.

“It unites a community coming together to honor Jack — to love Jack,” Handeke says.



JACK LARCHER

“There are many people like me who have been touched by him in their lives.”

The event will not only benefit Larcher but also show off his hardy Early Riser corn, which he has spent the past decade perfecting. Caladonia has made just 200 bottles of Early Riser, and they’ll be for sale exclusively at the release party, in flask-style bottles. Head distiller **MIKE CHAMBERLAIN** has

reserved the rest a few months to make 250 bottles of bourbon, which will be available later this year.

For \$400, guests can reserve a box packed with Vermont goods donated to help Larcher raise as much as \$20,000, or half of his accumulated medical bills. Inside the box, besides Early Riser, guests will find a half-pound piece of seasonal Alpha Cheese

cheese from **JASPER HILL FARM**, tofu from **VERMONT SOY**, veggies from **PETERS ORGANS** and seeds from **WIND-HOWING ORGANICS/DEEDS**. Butterworth Farm is contributing a bag of cornmeal, and Larcher will sign copies of his book *The Organic Grain Grower* at the event.

“It will be a time of gathering and talking and struggling together, a chance for many people in agriculture to pause for a few beers and come and be with Jack and [with] Anne,” says Handeke. “If that’s not enough to attract a whole who of food-industry folks, there’s always the limited edition whiskey.”

Guests can just reserve a box ahead of time by emailing Handeke@caladoniaspirits.com.

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Fermentation Fetish

Author Sander Katz talks about letting things go sour

BY ALICE LEVITT

This will be the summer of *Jander* in Vermont: Sander Katz, author of the books *Wild Fermentation*, *The Revolution Will Not Be Microvised* and James Beard Foundation award-winning *The Art of Fermentation*, will spend the month of July teaching and talking all over the state.

The *Triennes* writer also known as "Sanderkatz" (both in real life and on Twitter) published those books through Chelsea Green Publishing in White River Junction, but his Vermont connection goes back farther: In 1986, Katz cycled from Burlington to Hartford, Conn., championing a group of teenagers and checking out the roads and crannies of the Green Mountains along the way. He recalls it as "the best summer job I ever had."

Katz's latest local foray started when he signed up to teach a two-week long class at Shelburne College in July, centered in the course quickly led to several smaller gigs across Vermont. At Shelburne, Katz will teach students the basics of fermenting garden-fresh veggies, as well as introducing them to making salsa, kefir and yogurt, sauerkraut, and fruit, lightly fermented beverages.

In anticipation of Katz's run, we asked him some questions that probably aren't part of his planned curriculum:



Sander Katz

[Chosen], and actually I have some of [ferment]. Peter Schreiner's sauerkraut found in with my sauerkraut from before I fermented him.

SD: You've been HIV positive for decades. Did focusing on your health enhance your interest in fermented food?

SK: It's a tricky question. When I wrote *Wild Fermentation* in 2008, my little bio said—I believe the wording was "He fermented foods have been a part of my healing." From that many people extrapolated that I somehow

cured AIDS or reversed HIV from my body using fermented foods.

I'm just trying to be clear with people that that's not the case. Fermented foods that have their probiotic bacteria enter our stomachs increase function. They can improve digestion and nutrient assimilation. Now we're learning they can improve mental health.

I've been on HIV meds for 34 years now. I wish I could say, "Oh, good eating kept me healthy" but I had a health crisis in 1989, and I've been on meds ever since then. I've certainly observed that I have not had the digestive problems that other people I've

met that have been on HIV meds have. I have a strong sense that my relatively good health and well-being has had something to do with the fermented foods I've been eating.

I'm trying to be careful and cautious. The first day of class [at Shelburne] will be a broad survey of how fermentation transforms food. And how it transforms food nutritionally. We'll get into some of that. I'm really trying to stay away from being a health guru and making people think that using sauerkraut is going to solve all of their problems. It might solve some.

SD: Have you taken other major dietary steps that you think may have improved your health?

SK: Eating lots of different things is best. Plant diversity just seems to me to be one of the biggest problems we have. A dozen or 20 plants is all that most of us are eating over and over and over again. I try to grow my weeds and incorporate lots of different kinds of plants.

Not that I'm a vegetarian. I have a garden, and I eat a lot out of my garden. There's a big part of it. I try to spend a little time growing every day. I'm not eating vast amounts of it. I spend three minutes clipping tops off. I'm really interested in eating different parts of the plant. I'm really interested in eating radish pods and other brassicas [members of the mustard family] that have overwintered.

SD: Are there any fermented foods you don't like?

SK: There are certainly fermented foods that I haven't tried. I'm super interested in all the Arctic fish traditions, but I've never been in that part of the world.

The first time I tasted *netto* [fermented soybeans with a distinctly mucous texture], it held no appeal at all to me. I found it really hard to grow. I read William Shurtleff's *The Book of Tofu* and *The Book of Miso* and cited them in *Wild Fermentation*. After he read it, he sent a letter mostly saying congratulations and also offering a little bit of critical feedback. Anyway, I said, "I'm going to give this *netto* another try?" On my next try, it tasted *oh* I love it.

As a young person, I wasn't drawn to stinky cheeses. The stinky ones are kind of off-putting. Now I'd go as far as a mile away

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MAY 16 | THEATER

In 1971, Bread and Puppet Theater staged *Bandcatcher in Hell* in response to president Nixon's pardon of Lt. William Calley, who orchestrated the My Lai massacre, one of the Vietnam War's worst atrocities. Bright red costumes, banners and giant masks punctuated poetically charged messages. Adapted for the Bush-Obama years, the show the New York Times calls "a spectacle for the heart and soul" returns to the stage as part of Bread and Puppet's 50th anniversary tour. Tackling topics from Guantanamo Bay to drone warfare, original cast members reprise their roles to celebrate the union of art and activism.

BREAD AND PUPPET THEATER

Friday, May 16, 8 p.m. at Fine Arts Center in Burlington, \$25. Info: 803-585-9190 or breadandpuppet.org



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SEE PAGE 8

MAY 17 | MUSIC



Heating Things Up

The Mercury with Burning Fridge glory like Alesana Brothers of Celts. It's like hands, only greater? Supporting this crew are Ross Robbins and David Lockman, a pair of 18-year-olds whose vocal harmonies and howl-and-scream sound-alike the Pennsylvania-based band's energetic shows. Looking strong, dynamic player Peter Thorne and guitarist Lou Robbins make highly aware arrangements that marry spot-on interpretations of Ozzy Osbourne's music with unbridled enthusiasm. With technical prowess and free-spirited feeling power the group's 2013 release, *Freedom for Time*, and make audience members reconsider the possibilities of traditional music.

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calendar

PG. 16, 16P.12

JOE YAKA Students first focus is through family member and grandfather. *Joe Yaka: Burlington* 8 p.m. Tues. 10 p.m. Thurs. www.vtbeurfest.com Info: 495-4000

SANDREW CLAP Poet, novelist and actor. *Sandrew Clap: Burlington* 8 p.m. Tues. 10 p.m. Thurs. www.vtbeurfest.com Info: 495-4000

YOUNG CRICKET Pop band to enter their second year. *Young Cricket: Burlington* 8 p.m. Tues. 10 p.m. Thurs. www.vtbeurfest.com Info: 495-4000

Kids

ACCOMPLISH STORY TIME Little ones enjoy age 5 picture book and audiobook. *Accomplish Story Time: Burlington* 10 a.m. Tues. 10 p.m. Thurs. www.vtbeurfest.com Info: 495-4000

GROUP-UP STORY TIME Picture books, finger play and interactive activities. *Group-Up Story Time: Burlington* 10 a.m. Tues. 10 p.m. Thurs. www.vtbeurfest.com Info: 495-4000

SLAMMER-UP OPEN-UP AND ACTIVITY TIME Super fun and exciting. *Slammer-Up Open-Up and Activity Time: Burlington* 10 a.m. Tues. 10 p.m. Thurs. www.vtbeurfest.com Info: 495-4000

HOUSE OF THE FUTURE Open house for all ages. *House of the Future: Burlington* 10 a.m. Tues. 10 p.m. Thurs. www.vtbeurfest.com Info: 495-4000

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concerts

POWER TRIP POWER TRIP: A band from Burlington. *Power Trip: Burlington* 8 p.m. Tues. 10 p.m. Thurs. www.vtbeurfest.com Info: 495-4000

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Our annual Best of the Beasts Pet Photo Contest starts Wednesday, May 11. Check back next week to submit your photos at sevenandkids.com

PLANT SALE See 1442 to 1445, p. 3

PLANT SWAP Bring gardeners and swap the plants of your area. See 1446. Albany, Maryland. 9 a.m. to noon. Free info. 438-3387

Business

UPPING SHIRAZI SALE Shirazi Shermans to reveal one of the most successful business owners in the world at a 100th Anniversary Party. Albany, N.Y. 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free info. 338-341-4103.

NEST BOUTIQUE YARD SALE More than 100 items of clothing and accessories. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-2003

Entertainment

ACADEMY OF GARDENERS 100 FRIDAY: **CONTEMPORARY GARDEN FITNESS STUDIO WITH AEROBIC PERFORMANCE**. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Events

MISS JAM Six students help five judges determine who will represent Albany, New York at the Miss America pageant. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

NORTH LANSING PERSONAL SWAP & BOOK SALE Come check out the personal swap and book sale. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

RED CROSS SCHOOLHOUSE AND ROLL BALL The Red Cross is looking for girls and women to join the Red Cross for the schoolhouse and roll ball. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

A NEW HOME FOR YOU **HOUSE OPENING** Open house for the new home for the Red Cross. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

Fairs & Festivals

ALBANY VALLEY & BOUTIQUE FEST The Red Cross is looking for girls and women to join the Red Cross for the schoolhouse and roll ball. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

BOOKS Come visit the Red Cross for the schoolhouse and roll ball. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

Film

THE REMINDER OF BARBARA WORTH Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

Food & drink

BOUTIQUE FARMERS MARKET More than 100 items of clothing and accessories. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-2003

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CAPITAL CITY FARMERS MARKET More than 100 items of clothing and accessories. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-2003

CHOCOLATE TASTING Taste the best of the chocolate world. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

EMPTY BOWL DINING Low cost meals for the hungry. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

KOREAN FOOD FEST Taste the best of Korean food. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

MOONLIGHT FARMERS MARKET More than 100 items of clothing and accessories. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-2003

NEWPORT FARMERS MARKET More than 100 items of clothing and accessories. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-2003

NORTHWEST FARMERS MARKET More than 100 items of clothing and accessories. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-2003

NORWICH FARMERS MARKET More than 100 items of clothing and accessories. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-2003

OUTLAND COUNTY FARMERS MARKET More than 100 items of clothing and accessories. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-2003

WINDHOLM FARMERS MARKET More than 100 items of clothing and accessories. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-2003

Garden

INDIAN FARMERS MARKET More than 100 items of clothing and accessories. Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free info. 438-2003

Health & fitness

ALBANY AND-OUTDOOR YOGA Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

CARE OF SELF SERIES Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

ECOLOGICAL MICROBES Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free info. 438-3387

Kids

THE TRUCK RAP Albany, N.Y. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free info. 438-3387



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calendar

SEPTEMBER 18-19

VERMONT YOUTH ORCHESTRATION FUN RUN
Sponsored by the Vermont Youth Orchestra, the Vermont Youth Orchestra School Bus Project will take the youth orchestra on a day-long music-themed tour. The Vermont Youth Orchestra will be performing at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

WOMEN'S FASHION DESIGNER (by the artist) will be a day-long fashion design workshop. The workshop will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

GREEN MOUNTAIN GLOBAL FORUM (by the artist) will be a day-long forum. The forum will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

JAYVET HEADLINE (by the artist) will be a day-long headline. The headline will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

THE LAST 5 YEARS (by the artist) will be a day-long event. The event will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

THE MARRIAGE OF FOLK (by the artist) will be a day-long event. The event will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

MON. 19
BACKYARD COMPOSTING WORKSHOP (by the artist) will be a day-long workshop. The workshop will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

INTRO TO BACKYARD HOMEOWNERS (by the artist) will be a day-long event. The event will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

community
PUBLIC MEETING: ART TALK (by the artist) will be a day-long public meeting. The public meeting will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

SMITHSONIAN: RELAX UNDER THE SUNSHINE (by the artist) will be a day-long event. The event will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

education
STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (by the artist) will be a day-long conference. The conference will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

LIBRARY LITERATURE (by the artist) will be a day-long event. The event will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

food & drink
WINE TASTING: WINE TASTING WITH THE BEEHIVE (by the artist) will be a day-long event. The event will be held at the Vermont State Capitol. Tickets: \$10. For more information, visit www.vyoschoolbusproject.com.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY [Name]

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SEVEN/24/14

BY NICHOLE D'AMICO

PHOTOGRAPH BY

Like other grocers, Trader Joe's sells meat from animals raised on drugs. Chickens and other animals are regularly fed antibiotics to make them grow faster and tolerate unsanitary conditions. This may not sound like a big deal, but this overuse of drugs is causing them to lose their effectiveness in treating lethal infections in humans.

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Larger buds of these trees
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 are just 5-10% of the
 buds. But I'm not sure.
 I'll be back in the
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TOUCHING BASES IT LONG The 1996 season

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SCAN THESE PAGES
WITH THE LAXAR APP
TO WATCH VIDEOS
OF THE ARTISTS

SEE PAGE 11



LA Story

In the City of Angels, Myra Flynn takes a big step forward

THE CLARK MILL SITE



she says. "Trying to rise above that level was something I needed and really appreciated. Not that there weren't challenges in Vermont, as well. But I needed to go to Brooklyn to get to the next step."

According to Flynn, her New York men paid dividends almost immediately. Shortly after arriving, she met a group of musicians she describes as "the band members who are going to be heartbreak and, with me for life." One of these musicians, Phishog drummer Matt Maguire, produced her first record, the soulful, rock-influenced *Hill House* (2000).

If *Brooklyn* loved Flynn to change things up a bit musically, the borough's denizens willingly accepted her approach to songwriting, including the expression of her Irish and African American roots.

The music has changed, becoming the mainstream here changed," says Flynn. "But my frisk of nature, weird way of writing songs and my old wisdom all still work. The Vermont folkies know The Caltex influences from my father. The soul that comes from my mother and my family. People appreciate that long never-seen and valuable and real and you leave it all on the stage," as to rock."

Despite Backlund's chaos, Flynn's desire to "be where the work is" pushed her away. She considered Australia, and even wanted there, but decided it would mean starting "from scratch — something she didn't want to do. On her way back to the States, she stopped over in LA, where an uncle — a musician she admired — told her to "her closest man. Although she hasn't moved to LA permanently — she will

manages her apartment in Brooklyn, and stays with an aunt and uncle when in L.A. — Pitya will spend July and August in the studio cutting her new record. And while she's confused about the hair-fur producers — which included a recent stop at Pitya-fur's Brother's Way studio — choosing a studio is just the first step: the producers. After that, she'll have to line up musicians to work with. She's quick to point out that decisions in that regard will be made in collaboration with the production team, and won't be entirely hers. That said, she's keen to bring at least one Vancouverer to L.A. for the sessions: pop master and frequent collaborator Gregory Dawkins.

Gregory produced my sophomore album," Flynn says. "He's absolutely one of the most talented people I have ever met and I would love to have him with me wherever I am."

As for songs for the record, Flynn doesn't rule out writing new ones. But she'll likely draw from the vast archive she's already assembled.

"I've got hundreds of songs in the bank," Flynn says. "It's just a matter of whether or not they will fit the project. The idea here is to take the ascending quality to the next level."

Helping her produce a new record isn't all Flynn's new management team will do. They'll be on the lookout for any number of opportunities, from licensing tunes for film and commercial work to breaking tours. As she explains it, "Their job is to assemble a team for me that sticks. That's the new model I want to encourage every one to take this year, instead of holding out for the lottery market of a record label that might not, or at that same time, the support and might be more like, 'Sign here, we'll observe you until the record finds

night." It's quite nice to have people looking out for me [as a restaurateur]."

Meanwhile, for those Vermont fans who miss seeing Flynn perform live, they'll have plenty of upcoming opportunities, including this Friday, May 16, at the *Boothby Good and Beautiful* show.

side. Louis opening for her longtime friend, Melissa Ponzio, and Saturday, May 17, at the Tapago Music Hall in White River, Junction, with fellow neo-folk singer Sam Flynn has 28 gigs booked for June (including shows at Burlington, Montpelier, St. Albans, Plattsburgh and Randolph) and sometimes in the (sometimes distant) future, she intends to return to her home state on a more permanent basis.

"I still consider Vermont home, and I miss it every day," Flynn says. "Someone in the music business once told me, 'If you want to be great, but you have to seem it to be able to go back there and be more and use what...'"

"I love that, because I want to go back to Vermont and just chill out with my family and friends, but I feel like I need to do this battle for at least five more years. Then I will have earned the right to go there and live peacefully again." ☺

INFO

Hotellou Tannek and Myra Flynn: Friday May 18, in the Higher Ground Showers Lounge in South Burlington 7 p.m. \$15/17 AA.

Aweside Sensuals with Rex and Myra Flynn: Saturday May 17, at the Tapelo Music Hall in White River Junction 8 p.m. \$15 AA.

As Myra Flynn describes it over the phone, her search for a producer for her next record sounds a little like *Mr. Nobody* doing *Twelve*.

"Two hours working with one to two producers a day, doing some recording to get a feel for whether or not I have chemistry with them," Flynn says. But it may be the location of the studio hops rather than their pace that makes Flynn's latest adventure so notable. She's speaking from Los Angeles, the home base of her new management team, which is sorting her up to cut a new disc and cover the summer and promote it with touring and appearances after a fall release.

LA is the latest move up the professional ladder for Flynn, who grew up in Randolph, and spent the better part of the last decade building a career in Vermont.

an singer and songwriter — but not in the accounts Americans win of many of her compositions. Instead, Flynn focused on increasingly polished explanations of her soul, producing three solo records between 2006 and 2013. Hardworking, determined and above all realistic, Flynn eventually came to the conclusion that if she wanted to go big with her career, staying in Vermont wasn't an option.

In 2011, *Flynn* made the move to Brooklyn. The relocation meant the chance to jump full on into the East Coast's most vibrant music scene and get a bit closer to the national media spotlight. But, says *Flynn*, Brooklyn also forced her to step up her game.

¹² The challenging nature of being lost in the city and being up against people who are really great musicians was important."

SOUNDbites

BY DAN BELLES



Brand New Heavies

Given last week's mass cups over my misrepresentation of *new wave's* live album *Sides*, *Live at the Chandler* is a recent release, a few dates planned for that column had to be defined. The biggest casualty was a chance to fully debate on the spectacle that was Waking Windows 4, two weeks ago to Winoch. It was, in highly technical music-grammatical parlance, the tits.

Even in the abbreviated window I was able to catch—I missed the Saturday and Sunday festivities because I was out of town—the energy during the material was electric. The festival had a palpable buzz this year that reached beyond hardcore music fans and resonated with more general audiences. And that's why. One criticism that could be made of previous WWs was that they felt a little too cool, which can alienate part of any weekend warrior. This never again with that criticism—Waking Windows has always had a welcoming vibe—but I understood it. Indie crowds have a reputation for music snobbery, and nobody wants to go to a show and feel like the duck they're in high school.

But even given the decidedly underground bent of the WW's programming, I noted a real cross-section of attendees, from indie newcomers to casual concertgoers. That

tells me Waking Windows has crossed just enough into the local mainstream to inspire curiosity with larger audiences while retaining its cool cachet. And that, friends, is a really exciting development. For one thing, it means future festivals should have enough fun support—also money—to continue growing and attracting even more talented and noteworthy artists. New words in the English language make my soul weep more than the word "brand," especially when applied to music. But a brand is exactly what Waking Windows is becoming. And in this case, that's a great thing.

Shortly after the festival concluded, the two primary architects of Waking Windows, Angusplury Media and MSR Presents, announced they were merging into a new production company called Waking Windows Presents. On the surface, that doesn't mean a whole hell of a lot. The two groups had essentially been functioning in one entity for the past few years anyway, coproducing shows everywhere from the South End studio space to the Higher Ground Ballroom to the First Unionism Universalist Society church in Burlington. That won't change. The

difference is the new name, and it's important for a subtle reason.

Because the Waking Windows festival has been so successful, the name now carries more recognition, with casual fans that either Angusplury or MSR could have individually felt useless sense to capitalize on that cultural currency. Why? Because then you can do things like score the coup of the year: **WAKING WINDOWS HOTEL** for a two-night run at the Higher Ground Ballroom on September 9 and 10.

(BTW, if I have to explain to you who WWH is and why that's an amazing gig, we may need to start seeing other people. Also, given that Grand Point North falls a few days later, on September 13 and 14, we're looking at one of the all-time great weeks for rock music in Vermont. You have my permission to call in sick to work now.)

Back to the point, if the WWH show is my endgame, and I believe it is, Waking Windows—both the festival and the production company—has arrived in a major force in the local music scene. And that's good for everyone.

Bite Torrent

Speaking of festivals, this Saturday, May 10, the Magic Hat Brewing Company will host the fourth annual Heavyfest at its South Burlington brewery. Assuming anyone from MH will still speak to me after I confused my distaste for their flagship beer, it's in a recent perishing hour article for this post, I might even show up. Based on past experiences, it's a really fun day.

This year's lineup includes flashy Chicago-based headliners like the **SAVY** **SHOULDER** and **BRITNEY** plus efficient **AMERICAN JAZZ**. On the local angle, a check out funk rockers **SAVY** **SHOULDER**, who just released an excellent new record, *Therapyfunk*. **FRANK TURNER** (aka **FRANKIE**) has long been one of my favorite local singers and guitarists. And his new band, **FRANK TURNER** and the **LOOSE** **END**, have one of the funnest and most honest blarney I've seen recently. It rocks. "Ryan O'Neil and the Loose Ends are a whole lotta damn in various states

SOUNDBITES 40/100

live culture
VERMONT ARTS NEWS • VIEWS

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HIGHER GROUND

www.highergroundmusic.com

10
MAY
MATT ANDERSEN
SUNNY DAY
SUNNY DAY

11
MAY
MORNING PARADE
SUNNY DAY
SUNNY DAY

12
MAY
MELISSA FERRICK
SUNNY DAY
SUNNY DAY

13
MAY
A COMEDY EXTRAVAGANZA: A TRIBUTE TO ROB A. LACLAIR JR.
SUNNY DAY
SUNNY DAY

14
MAY
MATT ANDERSEN
SUNNY DAY
SUNNY DAY

15
MAY
BORGORE
SUNNY DAY
SUNNY DAY

16
MAY
ONCE UPON A CABARET
SUNNY DAY
SUNNY DAY

17
MAY
BUILT TO SPILL
SUNNY DAY
SUNNY DAY

18
MAY
THE HEAD AND THE HEART
SUNNY DAY
SUNNY DAY

19
MAY
FRANK TURNER AND THE SLEEPING SOULS
SUNNY DAY
SUNNY DAY



SAT 3 (1) DRESSING PARLEY CURTET (JAZZ)

Harmonic Theory

The list of artists with whom chromatic harmonica virtuoso **OSBORNE MARLEY** has collaborated is pretty incredible. Among others, it includes Pat Metheny, George Benson, Herbie Hancock and Sting, and with good reason. As *Justinton* put it, Marley plays "with the chops of Tony Thickman and the soul-soaring expression of Steve Wonder." The **OSBORNE MARLEY QUARTET** performs at the Flynnspace in Burlington on Saturday, May 31 as part of the 2014 Burlington Discover Jazz Festival.

WED.14

Burlington

ARTISAN Full-time Massagueria experience (open house) 9:30 p.m. 18+

HAUPPOURD SPEAKEASY Postgraduate Residency 9 p.m. 18+ DJ Chris Michael (house) 10 p.m. 18+

JP 3 FIVE Punk Rock with Dave 7 p.m. 18+ Karaoke with Mike 8 p.m. 18+

JANIS The Champagne Quartet (Jazz) 8 p.m. 18+

MAMMART PIZZA & PUB Open Mic with Andy Lahr 10 p.m. 18+

NEETAR 5 V1 Comedy Club Presents What a Little Comedy Open Mic (comedy variety) 7 p.m. 18+ Gang at the Garage: Billie H. Baker (rock) 9:30 p.m. 18+ 10A

OSBORNE MARLEY Irish Session 8 p.m. 18+ 40th Birthday

Celebration with DJ David (house) 9 p.m. 18+

JOHN INDIAN Latin Style Jump (Jazz) 7 p.m. 18+

GU GOLF (pop trap) 8 p.m. 18+

RED OCEAN BLUE ROOM DJ Ganga (Jazz) 10 p.m. 18+

THE DERRY PARADE (Burlington) Irish

Family & Friends Social Night (Jazz) 10:30 p.m. 18+

CHILDREN'S COUNTY

HEWER GROUND BALLROOM BOY Nightclub (Jazz) 8 p.m. 18+ 10A

THE PROBABLY HOUSE Weekend Wednesday

Golden Era Social Night (Jazz) 8 p.m. 18+

ON TAP BAR & GRILL Power Street Jazz 7 p.m. 18+

ON THE REE BAR Open House Session 7:30 p.m. 18+

barre/montpeller

RED HOT Irish Party 8 p.m. 18+

THE GARDEN PAVILION (Montpelier) Open

with Jaylan Lee Russell, Neil Chapman and

Katie Thoms 8 p.m. 18+ 10A

THREE MELTAS 5 New Dance with Dora

(Jazz) 8 p.m. 18+ The House of Music (Jazz) 9 p.m. 18+

afroce/annex area

THE FIVE CORNET Big Band 7:30 p.m. 18+

WED.15 PLACE (Jazz) 7:30 p.m. 18+

REDAUX FURNACE & LUMBER (Jazz) 7:30 p.m. 18+

middlebury area

CITY LIGHTS Karaoke 10 p.m. 18+

TWO OTHERS TAYLOR LOVING & STAGE (Jazz) 7 p.m. 18+ Open Mic 9 p.m. 18+

northeast kingdom

THE PARKER PUB CO. Irish Night 7 p.m. 18+

THE STRIP Post-Show/Afterparty (Jazz) 9:30 p.m. 18+

outside vermont

MONSIEUR Open Mic 8 p.m. 18+

BLUES RIDGE DJ Skippy All Request (Jazz) 8 p.m. 18+

THU.15

Burlington

FRANKLIN LIPS Only Michael (Jazz) 10 p.m. 18+

HEARTY 5 Records 8 p.m. 18+

HAUPPOURD SPEAKEASY Postgraduate Residency (Jazz) 9 p.m. 18+ The House of Music (Jazz) 10:30 p.m. 18+

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outside vermont

MONSIEUR Open Mic 8 p.m. 18+
BLUES RIDGE DJ Skippy All Request (Jazz) 8 p.m. 18+

FRI.16

Burlington

ARTISAN Full-time Massagueria experience (open house) 9:30 p.m. 18+
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"THEATER IN THE HEAD"

Fri. & Sat., May 16 & 17 at 8 pm

Fresh Faces

"Under 30," Chaffee Downtown

In previous years, the Chic'ee Art Center's annual juried exhibition "Under 30" consisted of 35 artists not yet 30 and was held in the Rustford establishment's historic mansion, whose many rooms were converted into a large, salon-style show. This year, ongoing renovations at the Chic'ee mansion required both a move to its sister site downtown space and a "street approach."

The Chic'ee Downtown gallery is a smaller, rectangular space with large windows looking out to the street. While it lacks the expansive elegance of the Art Center, the room fills quickly with people at opening night receptions and feels cozy.

This year, the Chic'ee's exhibition committee invited artists under the age of 30 to apply, but ultimately accepted just six of those and asked them to submit up to six works each. The resulting show is a real deeper look at these young artists, all Vancouverites in their twenties, than the larger sampling has done in the past.

Nicole Carpenter's 27 by 34-inch "Engage ment" is a red-hand photograph of a nude female torso. The woman's hands cover her breasts, while another pair of hands wraps around her waist. The pose is tender, yet it's a little off-kilter, the context is asexual one. Carpenter's paintings also focus on hands in an almost ritualistic way, disembodied, coming from darkness.

His assemblages by Steven J. Mesnyan II consist of rough wooden bones—ranging in size from 15 by 16 inches to 19 by 14 inches and mounted on pedestals—that hold photographs and found objects. In his artist statement, Mesnyan writes that he "observes inspiration from what is discarded, forgotten and unacknowledged." He thinks of his work as sort of a new show that allows the viewer to see how I interact with the world around [me], good or bad." Mesnyan creates narratives with found trash, including pipes, knobs and rubber cincture, a black plastic pipe that serves as a vase, broken-in glass bottle tops, bone and the scales of decaying bones.

Mesnyan's series of four photographs of nude female figures and abandoned structures are prominent in his assemblages and evoke a sense of foreboding. This work may provide "windows," but, closed on all but one side, the bones also convey the sense of an open closet where memories are laid to rest.

Kristine Parton uses line and symbolism in her paintings to create colorful, bold images. Her highly stylized symbols, which look like both script and graffiti, appear to be words but are indecipherable. "The Rose," a three-panel painting—two panels are 11 by 24 inches each, the third, 30 by 20 inches—uses long, curving lines that resemble organic forms, like plants sprouting in spring. In other works, including "The Crane" (36 by 20 inches), Parton adorns her broad script with curved filigree. In her semi-abstract, she dis-



"The Rose" (left to right) by Kristine Parton

"Abstracted" by Kristine Parton



connect this new series of objects. "The is a corruption of dated filigree petals—something once so beautiful...that has died, is now filling a purpose more stark," Parton writes.

Renee Kaczmarek's works generally are charcoal and pastel. Her 48 by 36-inch, mixed-media sculpture "Steering Tree," exhibited on a pedestal in the gallery's center, holds surprises on closer inspection. From its dark trunk and multiple branches, many wide-eyed faces peer out. It's full of life, even though the heads are disembodied, as if they were visitors from another world. Kaczmarek's charcoal and pastel drawings, hung nearby, have a similarly playful, even childlike quality.

A SHOW FEATURING YOUNG ARTISTS IS BY DEFINITION AN EXHIBITION OF THEIR EARLY WORK.

On the opposite wall, Kristine Chermant's six prints, matted and presented in single black frames, show a consistency and purity that distinguish them on this exhibition. Her color monographs are particularly attractive interpretations of the natural world. While Chermant's explorations are abstract, she shows elements of the original flowers, seeds and natural surroundings to remain recognizable. The resulting images are both typical and approachable.

Note: Mesnyan's photographs are informed by travel, anthropology and art. His artist statement describes journeys to more than 25 countries over the past three years, yet his images do not constitute a travelogue. Rather, they capture what a traveler sees but a tourist often misses. Mesnyan's photos are quiet, sometimes sober reflections of life, culture and humanity. While their locations aren't always revealed, the artists' very feeling knows legends about the world's people is apparent.

A show featuring young artists is by definition an exhibition of their early work. Yet, as the pieces in "Under 30" reveal, early work can also be highly inventive. Each year, as the Chaffee's staff seeks out and curates collections by younger artists, they also seek to present energetic ideas and fresh takes on artistic command.

MEG BRAZILL

INFO

"Under 30" artwork by Nicole Carpenter, Kristine Chermant, Renee Kaczmarek, Steven J. Mesnyan II, Nicole Mesnyan and Kristine Parton. "rough June 8 at Chaffee Downtown Rustford chaffeedowntown.org

DIANNE WILLENBERG: "The envisioned" series in ink on collage and colored pencil by the Jewish artist. Photo CD required to enter. Through June 27. Info: 800-234-6345. Sweetest's Gallery in Montpelier.

JOHN LUNNEY: Large scale black and white photos of Vermont dairy owners from a farmer's perspective on display. Through May 27. Info: 253-6534. Art Photo Community Center Gallery.

JUDITH WOOD: Monumental environmental oil painting of a 14 mile "Through June 27. Info: 800-234-6345. Vermont Sculpture (Last Lobby) in Montpelier.

LARA LUNNEY: "Televisions, Beers and Other Perils," abstract experimental paintings by the Jewish artist. Through June 1. Info: 253-6534. Capital Galleries, Inc. Info: 253-6534. The Green Mountain Art Gallery in Capital Center in Montpelier.

"TWO THINGS ARE EVER AFTER": Recent two female art in variety of techniques by 14 members of the Surface Art in Association. Through May 27. Info: 253-6534. Studio/Space Arts in Stowe.

ARTISTS/WORKSHOPS BY DATE

BARBARA WILLENBERG: "Dancing Elements," Pastel 16 paintings by the Jewish artist. Through June 27. Info: 800-234-6345. Capital Galleries, Inc. in Stowe.



'Lost Gardens of New England'

Just in time for spring's arrival, the Shelburne Museum in Middlebury has rolled out an indoor and outdoor exhibit paying homage to the region's rich history in "garden arts." The indoor section of the exhibit features drawings, watercolors, pencils and oil paintings that depict garden-design trends through the centuries, called from Historic New England's collection, and glass-lens cases of 19th-century Vermont country gardens from the museum's permanent collection. Also inside, contemporary color photographs by Shelburne Farms' woodland manager Marshall Webb are juxtaposed with black-and-white archival images from the estate. Outdoor works by two contemporary Vermont sculptors lure visitors into the Shelburne's own gardens: whimsical wooden sculptures by Sherburne's Norton Lacombe, and a steel-and-corn tower by Charlotte artist Edith Bond-Witte. Through August 10. Gallery talk on Wednesday, May 14, at noon. A tour of Middlebury area "hidden gardens" is Sunday, June 8, noon to 5 p.m. Featured: "The Grange, Colman Estate, Lincoln, MA, 1888" by Sarah Fletcher Bendick Colman.

IN THE STUDIO WITH MARY BEVANS: The gallery celebrates its 30th anniversary year with an exhibit of paintings in a variety of mediums and techniques by the Montpelier artist. Through September 3. Info: 800-234-6345. Sweetest's Gallery in Montpelier.

RENT SHAW: Night photography featuring two subjects from the local area. Through July 6. Info: 800-234-6345. Sweetest's Gallery in Montpelier.

DIANE AND ALICE VERHEIJEN'S HONORING OF LUNNEY: An exhibit celebrating all aspects of the sport including chess and other things. Through June 27. Info: 253-6534. Vermont Art and Sculpture Museum in Stowe.

LANDSCAPE TRADITIONS: The new wave of the gallery presents a contemporary exhibition works by emerging artists. Through January 1, 2015. **BERNICE KINKADE:** "Local Color" an exhibition of new paintings by the Jewish artist. Through June 27. Info: 253-6534. Sweetest's Gallery in Montpelier.

MADE LAUREL GARDEN: Current showing by the Vermont artist. Through July 6. Info: 800-234-6345. The Arts in Capital Center.

ROBERT FLETCHER: Sculptures and paintings on steel sculpture by the Jewish artist. Through June 27. Info: 800-234-6345. Sweetest's Gallery in Montpelier.

STYLING: JESSICA SHAW. BY P.M.

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STONED BY THE MEDIA

STONED BY THE MEDIA Art by Steven Allen is on display at Stone House Community and Harvard Union High School through June 1. Info: 202-728-7000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

TOM CALABRE Several graphic arts exhibits at the University of Wisconsin reflect his study trips to Greece, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

AND RIVER CALLED Art by Steven Allen is on display at Stone House Community and Harvard Union High School through June 1. Info: 202-728-7000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

NAME'S ARTIST Recent works by the artist are on display at the University of Wisconsin. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

MIDDLEBURY ARTS CENTER Art by Steven Allen is on display at the University of Wisconsin. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

QUINCY JAMES Art by Steven Allen is on display at the University of Wisconsin. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

BARBARA WATKINS Art by Steven Allen is on display at the University of Wisconsin. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

BATHING BEACHES Art by Steven Allen is on display at the University of Wisconsin. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

LEFT TURNING ON THE HILL Art by Steven Allen is on display at the University of Wisconsin. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

WATKINS BEACHES Art by Steven Allen is on display at the University of Wisconsin. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Book Arts Guild of Vermont

The annual spring show of the Book Arts Guild of Vermont, titled "Nature, Books and Botanicals," displays 52 works by 17 artists. Their handmade books feature open writing and illustrations, and many employ creative and unconventional binding techniques. Also on display are marble endpapers by Karen Douglas and oil and acrylic paintings by Rae Harrell, Lay Harrell and Glenn Reynolds. The latter also perform in the "brown and betwixt" theme. "It's going to feel like a jungle in here when we're done," says Rae Harrell. Through June 30 at the Rae Harrell Gallery in Hinesburg. Reception on Friday, May 18, 6-8 p.m. Featured: "Aesop's Fables" by Debra Knepper.

KEVIN HENRIKSEN Art by Kevin Henrikson is on display at the University of Wisconsin. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

WILLIAM CHANDLER BLICK AND JOHN CANNON Art by William Chandler Blick and John Cannon is on display at the University of Wisconsin. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

UNION 201 Art by Steven Allen is on display at the University of Wisconsin. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

FRANK YAMADA Art by Steven Allen is on display at the University of Wisconsin. Info: 608-263-1000. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Slow the Flow



THE ANGUISH OF SLOW MOTION

NEW IN THEATERS

FROM DRUGS John Turturro in a polished, hooded, macho black-and-white French war comedy about a middle-aged undercover cop turns to an unusual profession in the 1940s—after action and directed by Guillaume Laurant. **PG-13** (R)

GOZULELLA Can Gaudin (2014) is a surreal comedy about the recently dead found in an American man's black-and-white French war comedy about a middle-aged undercover cop turns to an unusual profession in the 1940s—after action and directed by Guillaume Laurant. **PG-13** (R)

BEHOLD YOURS (2014) is a surreal comedy about the recently dead found in an American man's black-and-white French war comedy about a middle-aged undercover cop turns to an unusual profession in the 1940s—after action and directed by Guillaume Laurant. **PG-13** (R)

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HOW TO PLAY

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ratings

- ★ = instant classic
- ★★ = excellent but not perfect
- ★★★ = very good
- ★★★★ = superior but not perfect
- ★★★★★ = superb

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY'S BEST OF THE YEAR
BY: RICH KOPPELMAN
ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY'S BEST OF THE YEAR
BY: RICH KOPPELMAN

CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE WINTER SOLDIER (2014) is a superhero movie about a man who is a superhero. **PG-13** (R)

CONVERSATION (2014) is a comedy about a man who is a comedian. **PG-13** (R)

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• Use a rain barrel
• Plant trees

Rain water from strong storms flows over roofs and driveways, picking up debris along the way. Stormwater can pollute our streams and Lake Champlain. You can help slow the flow of stormwater and help keep our waterways clean.



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READERS' PICKS

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NOMINATE

MAY 26-JUNE 13

Write in your favorites



DESIGNATE

JUNE 16-JULY 1

Pick the best from top finalists.



CELEBRATE

JULY 30

See who's won in Seven Days!

fun stuff

more fun! straight dope (p. 20)
crossword (p. c-5) & calico & sudoku (p. c-7)

* NEW COMICS

edie everette



Stick S Ang Elic: A Michael deForge *

chil Dr EN of th E Atom dave lapp *



du eighth



Curses, Foiled Again

Before three men who broke into a Inglewood store in Houston, Texas, could steal anything, one with a revolver looked into another building and a surveillance video showed the job ended the rifle to fire, "which then specified the suspects," police Officer Ed Ertel said last Saturday. They were being fired upon, both armed men opened fire, discharging nearly a dozen rounds, one of which went through a man's head, before all three fled (Houston's KHOU-TV).

Armed police investigating the murder of Russell Hammond, 49, arrested Gareth Olin, 24, after they found his 18-point, step-by-step plan detailing the perfect murder, written two months before Hammond's body was found. Supreme Court Justice Betty King said the murder plan corresponded with the school killing in "a remarkable way" (The Associated Press Times).

Life's Ironies

Former New York City police officer Gilberto Valle, 38, who was convicted of conspiring in kidnap, murder, cook and eat witness, was assigned to cook for his fellow inmates at Manhattan's Metropolitan Correctional Center. The so-called cannibal cop serves 64 cents on how making breakfast and lunch (New York's Daily News).

After Brett Bozarth, 17, lost his right arm while climbing a pole, making mistakes at the summer where he worked

in Maunabo, N.Y., the Ellis Lodge raised money to help doctor his medical bills by holding a pasta dinner (Potomac's North Country Now).

After Sir George, 35, pleaded guilty to sexual assault in Dallas, Texas, he faced up to 20 years in prison instead, Dallas County District Judge Jessica Hester ordered him to serve 45 days in jail and then "start 248 hours of Community Service at the Rape Crisis Center" (Dallas Observer).

Former Illinois State Rep Keith Farnham, 40, who twice sponsored bills calling for tougher penalties for child pornography, was charged with possession of child porn. In addition, authorities linked Farnham's email account to an online forum where users chat about their sexual preference. "It was not odd as I can handle," Farnham reportedly said in one chat. "I love them all, Y, K, L. I wouldn't be the least, I wish I had access to all the info and pass over easier" (Chicago Tribune).

After once publicly campaigning for a stricter gun law, Ugandan pastor Martin Shumba could be charged under that same law, according to Makerere University of Science and Technology professor Paul Kahura. "Pastor Shumba

has, if anything, promoted homosexuality where he is allegedly trying to fight it," Kahura said, pointing out that Shumba reportedly sends gay porn to his congregation, ostensibly to show it is evil. "Very nice people are going to get used to the idea at some point, even if you have one with fellow men, and armed with the knowledge Shumba has distributed, they will know exactly what to do" (Ottawa's Gay Star News).

The so-called cannibal cop earns 44 cents an hour making breakfast and lunch.

When Guns Are Outlined

Police accused Jeffrey Wilford Wooten, 32, of robbing a Walgreens restaurant in Norcross, Ga., with a pirated, which he used to force workers into the back of the restaurant while he robbed the cash register and ran. "It wouldn't be an ordinary weapon for your father," police Chief Warren Summers said, "that it was in a Walgreens" (Atlanta Journal-Constitution).

Tangled Web

A 30-year-old employee in Japan's biggest travel agency forgot to order 11 buses for a high school outing so the day before the trip he wrote a note purporting to be from a student threatening suicide unless the trip was canceled. He gave the note to the principal, who decided to go ahead with the excursion as planned.

After no buses arrived the next morning, regulators from the Japan Tourism Agency mailed the officers of JTB Corp., which promised to punish the worker. The school, meanwhile, was included in a trip with a different agency (Agence France Press).

Sounds of Silence

Sales of gas silencers are booming, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, which noted the market is up 17 percent in 2010, resulting in a one-month backlog for ATF approval of registrations. Silencers, which sell for between \$750 and \$1,400, are just one way gun owners are accessorizing their firearms purchases, according to gun industry analyst Fred Horn of CRT Capital Group in Stamford, Conn. Other popular add-ons are flash lights, laser sights, stock, pistol grips and rail systems for attaching even more accessories (CNN).

A new anti-molester aimed at late-night sessions in Arlington County, Va., bans "winking" after 2 a.m., and also yelling, shouting and screaming. The County Board painted out its first in metro Washington, D.C., as target "over-conversation," or the human voice. "We're not Mayberry RFD," board member John V. Heald said, "but we're not Manhattan or the Potomac either" (Washington Post).

jen cartoon

OVER-HELPING BECOMES NEW PARENTS' KEY CONNECTION BETWEEN UNWANTED CHILD ABUSE. THE PARENTS ARE ALL REFUSE TO WALK AWAY FROM THEIR KIDS. AS AFTERBURNS BECOME MORE COMMON, HERE ARE SOME.

GET WELL GIFTS FOR THE UNVACCINATED



Harry bliss



And how are you enjoying the least expensive wine on the menu?"



THIS MODERN WORLD

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WHY CAN'T THE CURRENT LINE, I WANT BLAME TO BECAUSE OF SOME NOUNS IN PLACE!



AND IT'S TIME TO SUCCUB CHARGE THE CURRENT LINE AGAIN.



by TOM TOMORROW

CONGRATULATIONS TO HIS CHOICE. I THINK THE LATEST REPUBLICAN IS THE NEW FACE OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY!

I WISH I HAD BEEN CHOOSING BLAME FOR OFFICE.



HEAT REPUBLICAN FIND A NEW CHAMPION. A CATHARTIC ALLIANCE WITH REPUBLICAN CHAMPIONSHIP!



ELF CAT

A COMIC STRIP BY JAMES KOCHALKA

©2004



TO BE CONTINUED...

RED MEAT

burned-bottom bathysphere

from the secret class of Max Cannon

Hi, I'm here about the job you advertised in the magazine for a bathysphere class job.



Um... no, not really. I'm just here about the snack job.



No, why are you asking me all these questions. I'm just here about the snack job.





(1 April 2001–May 2001)

Is it you not having more in common with a marathon runner than a speed racer? Your best qualities tend to emerge when you're committed to a process that takes a while to unfold. Learning to pace yourself is a crucial life lesson. That's how you get attuned to your body's signals and master the art of pacing for your physical needs. That's also how you come to understand that it's important not to compare yourself constantly to the progress other people are making. Having said all that, Taurus, I want to recommend a temporary exception to the rule. Just for now, it may make sense for you to run flat for a short time.

seeds of ripe cucumbers to be growing in your backyard in a couple of weeks. Even if you find cucumbers seeds in your backyard today you shouldn't expect straight rows of cucumbers to be growing there by June 1. Let's give even more precise hints. If you carefully plant cucumber seeds in new rows in your backyard today, you should not expect ripe cucumbers to be growing by August, but here is the kicker: if you carefully plant cucumber seeds in your backyard today and weed them and water them, so they grow you can indeed expect ripe cucumbers in August.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) "If we want the rewards of being loved," says columnist Theodore, "we have to submit to the mortifying ordeal of being known." How are you doing with this trade-off? Consider this: a Cold War aphorism I once saw was sometimes inclined to trade with us softly as we have raised fistings about becoming vulnerable and weak—enough to be fully known by others. We might even choose to live without the love we crave so as to pay up the business of strength that comes from being mysterious from concealing our depths. The coming weeks will be a good time for you to revisit this conundrum.

LEAD (July/Aug. 2002). There's a place of art and critical analysis, says David Lauder, director of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, in the following example of the Apollo 11 mission, which delivered two astronauts to the lunar surface in November 1969. One of the artists, Leo Manasse, Andy Warhol drew the image of a signpost piece, similar to what you might see on the wall of a public restroom. "Was doing the 'comic book boy' thing," says Andy, "and suddenly Warhol's comment: 'No more Leo! Leo's taking his play too far.' I was like, 'Well, I was just doing a stylistic appeal to look like Warhol's approach. If you're called in to tell your self expression to a big undertaking, let in the direction of severity and reverence and dignity."

VIRSO (Aug. 24/dept. 23). The planet we live on is in constant transformation. Nothing ever stays the same. To succeed let alone survive, we need to reexamine ourselves in the relentless forward motion. We are busy doing a dance to music played by some. Daily. Forever.

CHECK OUT HOW FREEDOM'S SHAPED PEOPLE

way of finding our challenge. How are you doing with this aspect of the "forget to be hostile" bit but deal with it gratefully? I believe it and aspire to be a master of it someday! Whenever your current attitude is I'm here to tell you that in the coming months you could become much more comfortable with the constant flow — and even learn to enjoy it. Are you ready to be a —

LIBRA (Sept. 29-Oct. 29) It isn't that Libra like sweet disorder, said English author Vita Sackville-West, but it has to be judiciously arranged. That's your theme for the week. Libra Pleist needed; how precise a formulation this is. Pleist and ordinary disorder will not provide you with the epigrams and breakthroughs you deserve and need. The disorder must be meant. If it doesn't make you feel at least a little excited and more in love with life, avoid it. The disorder must also be judiciously arranged. What that means is that it can't be based on envy or pride. Rather it must have art and style and a hint of grace written

SCORPIO (Jan. 23-Mar. 21) I have three sets of questions for you, Scorpio. First, are you unhappy now? Is there a person who draws inspiration from the Aiyu you find? How is my second question: Are you longing inside for someone to give you the cause of passion that consumed and inspires them compelling them to find you? These various perspectives mean the truest thing: Are you inspired? Second: Are you an influence that educates someone about the meaning of life? If you are, play any of these notes. Scorpio, they are able to help you and transform. If you don't currently serve in kind, one of these functions would serve a good cause you, still not.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
According to my reading of the astrological charts, you should downsize from the Chinese proverb "never do anything stand up that you can do sitting, or anything sitting that you can do lying down." In other words, Sagittarius, you need to sit down. So please lay up to any influence that says "do it now!" be markedly efficient! Multitask as if your life depended on it! The more active you are, the more successful you will be!

give yourself ample opportunity to play and
create and nurture.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) In Raymond Chandler's pulp fiction novel *Knave*, My Lovely has his main character do a "sniffy Purple Mountain" All one goodie Mountain says "I needed a drink. I needed a lot of them." I needed a vacation. I needed a home in the country. Right? I told you a case is not a hot one, gum!" In contrast with your astrological cologne, Capricorn, I'm adding you to the list of what you might be like. Mountain. Are there differences between what you do in your mind and what you actually have? If so, now is an excellent time to launch initiatives to fix the discrepancies.

AQUARUS (Jan 20-Feb 18) There's a slightly better chance that usual that you will see a whitetail deer with a goldwood nose at work on vacation. The odds are still higher than normal that you will receive a lamping invitation from a secret admirer or meet the tool tool you desire, even know you were searching for or get an accidental text message from a stranger who turns out to be the man or woman of your beloved from a previous lifetime. But, the likelihood of all those scenarios pales in comparison to the possibility that you will win big, secretly about how to make yourself even more like info@news.1news.com.

PSYCES (Feb. 18-March 2nd) Author Live! Dan Carlin's weekly book club, where he shares his imaginary friends stop-talking to you. I suggest that something like this is what he's really hoping for, for you! This one—everyone not a member. What I mean is that some of the most reliable and sympathetic voices in your head have grown quiet. Ancestors, your friends who are no longer in your life, memories you still have feelings for, former teachers who have remained a strong presence in your imagination, animals you once cared for, have now departed, and maybe even some good old-fashioned angels into angels. Where, did they go? What happened to them? I suspect they're merely taking a drink. They may have thought it best to let you find your way to it while still aware. They're

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BRADY

He's not the only one to work things out. In the new
world of work, it's not just the way you work
that counts. It's the way you work without you.
He's not the only one to work things out. In the new
world of work, it's not just the way you work
that counts. It's the way you work without you.

MAKING TALLER FRIENDS

We moved in a new house. The new house is a
new house. The new house is a new house. The
new house is a new house. The new house is a
new house. The new house is a new house.

CAMP JACOB

It's not just the way you work that counts. It's
the way you work without you. It's not just the
way you work that counts. It's the way you
work without you. It's not just the way you
work that counts. It's the way you work without
you.

GOING TO THE GYM

We moved in a new house. The new house is a
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new house. The new house is a new house.

GOING TO THE GYM

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